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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHER BELIEFS ABOUT THE NATURE OF WRITING AND THEIR INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

BY

Ⓒ ARLENE MICHELE SAVORY

A THESIS
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION

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submitted by Arlene Michele Savory

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Date September 23, 1986

ABSTRACT

This study focused upon the beliefs and practices of elementary school teachers in the area of writing. The purposes of the study were to examine teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing and writing instruction, to identify observable instructional practices they employ in teaching writing, and to discern the relationship between the two.

Six teachers were videotaped as they each taught two lessons leading to extended student writing. Each teacher completed a questionnaire concerning his/her general writing program. A modified version of the Repertory Grid (Bannister, 1968) and Laddering Procedure (Hinkle, 1968) was conducted with each teacher to elicit beliefs about writing and writing instruction.

The videotaped lessons were analyzed independently by both the teacher and researcher to identify observable instructional practices and were reported in table form. Profiles of each teacher were built based upon the gathered data. Beliefs and practices were examined for relationships and the findings reported in a case study format. Data from each case study and across the case studies were analyzed in reference to the research questions.

All teachers were able to generate a number of belief statements (superordinant constructs). Although all belief statements began as value statements specific to writing, not all ended up as beliefs specific to writing. The study found that although some commonality of beliefs was evident, teachers had individualistic belief systems about the writing process that tended to be influenced by the individual's global belief system.

The practices each teacher employed in teaching writing were identified by the teacher and researcher independently as they viewed the videotaped lessons. Teachers varied in their method of response; some followed the video text closely while others discussed general practices and philosophies. The researcher generally identified more specific, and repeated instances of particular practices than the teacher. Although some broad consistencies were present in teaching practices across the case studies, it was found that these practices were shaped into a unique instructional style for each teacher.

All six case studies showed a high degree of congruency between beliefs and practices.

Implications for pedagogical practices emerged and centered on developing self-awareness of one's beliefs and practices. Suggestions for ways of getting in tune with one's beliefs and of expanding one's repertoire of practices were made.

Some recommendations for further research were made.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM

I. Introduction

The acquisition and mastery of written language is an extremely complex process and one that remains relatively unexplored. In comparison with the study of speech and reading, research in written language production is still in its infancy. However, in the past several years, the field of language arts has experienced a growing interest in writing as witnessed by research studies and curriculum emphasis in schools.

Despite numerous research studies, books and articles on written language instruction, there is still little or no agreement on which practices promote successful learning. Part of the problem stems from the focus past research has taken. The major trend has been one of validating new and better methods or curricula (Graves, 1980); as such, the findings prescribed 'fool-proof' methods. Unfortunately the research failed to explain the varying degrees of effectiveness when these 'guaranteed' methods were translated into practice.

Recently researchers have begun entering the classroom in order to investigate teaching and learning in its naturalistic setting. These studies have mainly concentrated on the teachers' observable behaviors. To this end, several studies have indicated that the most influential variables in successful teaching-learning experiences lie not in the methods or the materials used, but in the teachers themselves (Bond and Dykstra, 1967; Flanders, 1970; Bennett, 1976; Gage, 1978; Brophy, 1979; Good, 1979). However, little account has been taken of the rationale behind the ways in which teachers approach, adapt and activate programs in their classrooms. It is becoming more apparent that it is the teacher's belief system or conceptual base which influences teaching practices (Brophy and Good, 1974). It would appear that a need exists to examine relationships between beliefs and practices.

If research is to be of real value to educators, it must progress in the direction of not only systematically describing the practices teachers use in the classroom but also of analyzing the beliefs and assumptions that guide these practices. This dimension of educational research is sorely lacking, especially in the context of the language arts classroom, and particularly in the domain of writing. Therefore, this study will examine the relationship between teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing and writing instruction, and the practices which occur in their classrooms.

II. Purpose of the Study

Inherent in the research was the growing realization that the study of teachers' belief systems can lead to a fuller understanding of teaching practices. If teaching behavior is guided by a set of beliefs, then, as Clark and Yinger (1977) pointed out, "more research is required on the relationship between teacher implicit theories and teacher perceptions, information processing and behavior" (p. 301). Therefore this study attempted to examine teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing and writing instruction. As well, it sought to identify observable instructional practices that each teacher employs in teaching the writing component of the language arts curriculum. Finally, the relationship between teacher beliefs and practices was examined.

Research Questions

Based upon the major purposes of the study, the following research questions were formulated.

1. What is the nature of teachers' belief systems regarding writing?

2. What practices do individual teachers employ in teaching the writing component of the language arts curriculum?

3. To what extent are an individual teacher's beliefs and practices congruent?

III. Definition of Terms for the Purpose of This Study

Instructional Practices - The observable approaches, procedures and techniques that a teacher uses in creating a learning experience.

Beliefs (system) - The sum of implicit and explicit personal truths that an individual holds.

Instructional Behaviors - The observable actions, mannerisms and responses that characterize a teacher's style during instructional time in the classroom.

Repertory Grid Procedure - A technique for eliciting the dimensions (or bi-polar constructs) that a subject commonly uses to analyze his world and upon which he bases predictions about his world.

Laddering Procedure - A process in which subjects construct a ladder of justifications for certain values they hold. The end result is a statement of an underlying belief.

IV. Design of the Study

Seven elementary school teachers from the Edmonton Public School System assented to take part in the study. All had been teaching for a minimum of three years.

Teachers were informed of the general nature of the study during an informal meeting prior to data collection.

Data collection proceeded in the following manner. Two lessons which ultimately led to extended writing by students were videotaped for each teacher. The lessons were part of the regularly scheduled timetable and curriculum of studies in language arts. During the videotaping the researcher kept field notes regarding the general atmosphere and physical layout of the classroom, as well as attitudes and involvement of the students and any other significant factors. The videotapes were later viewed, first by the researcher to identify observable behaviors and practices each teacher employed, and then, by the teacher and researcher together to allow the teacher to react and comment on observable practices he/she had used. The arrangement allowed for perceptions of the lessons to be gleaned by the researcher independent of the teacher. The viewing took place either on the same day as taping or the next school day. These sessions were audiotaped and later transcribed.

Teachers responded to a general questionnaire aimed at discerning their basic approaches, objectives and organization of the year-long writing program. This served to acquaint the researcher with the teacher's overall plan and where the two lessons fit into it. Finally, an adaptation of a Repertory Grid (Bannister, 1968) and

Laddering Procedure (Hinkle, 1968) was conducted to probe for each teacher's beliefs about writing.

Analysis of the data involved compiling and describing the perceptions of each teacher's instructional practices from two viewpoints, the individual teacher's and the researcher's. A profile of each teacher's belief statements was prepared and then compared to the two viewpoints of the teacher's instructional practices.

V. Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in the following ways:

1. The small sample reduced the generalizability of the study.
2. The limited number of lessons videotaped may not have adequately reflected the full range of the teacher's instructional practices.
3. The presence of the researcher and the videotaping equipment may have adversely affected the teacher's instructional behaviors.
4. The techniques used to tap the teacher's beliefs about the nature of writing and writing instruction may have been limited.

VI. Significance of the Study

Recently an increasing number of educational research projects have focused upon the classroom for the major purpose of observing instructional practices in their naturalistic settings. Ultimately the goal has been the understanding and improvement of the teaching-learning process. By moving away from a 'surface level' understanding of the teaching process towards a better understanding of the underlying beliefs that may influence instructional practices, this study may broaden the knowledge base concerning teaching in general.

Methods used in this study may prove beneficial as diagnostic devices for teachers wishing to understand and improve their instructional practices. A rationale for this method of data collection in the area of teacher beliefs and practices may be obtained. Finally, the investigation of relationships between teacher beliefs and practices could hold implications for inservice programs or curricula of teacher education institutions.

VII. Plan of the Research

Chapter One has identified the nature of the problem and the design of the study was outlined. The following four chapters report the study in its entirety. Chapter

Two contains a review of the pertinent literature. Chapter Three describes the sample, data collection procedures and instrumentation and analysis techniques. Chapter Four presents the individual case studies and their analyses. Chapter Five suggests conclusions based on the findings, and implications for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teaching is a complex process. While observations of teacher's instructional behaviours in classroom settings has contributed significantly to an understanding of classroom life, there is an increasing awareness of the need to investigate not only teacher's behaviours, but as well, the belief systems which guide these behaviours, in order to gain a fuller understanding of the teaching process. The impetus towards research in this area is based on the assumption that what teachers do is influenced by what they think and believe (Good, Biddle and Brophy, 1975; Clark and Yinger, 1979; Conners, 1978).

Much of the literature regarding teachers' beliefs has focused on this variable in relation to teacher effectiveness studies. The consensus expressed is that effective teachers are aware of their beliefs, not that effective teachers hold a certain set of beliefs. The concern is that "there is no such thing as a value-neutral action; teaching practices, whether consciously or unconsciously chosen, are an expression of beliefs held by the person" (Dobson and Dobson, 1983, p. 20). Marshall

(1973) points out the need for teacher awareness of personal value orientations before refinement and improvement of their craft can occur. Katz (1977) and Shallcross (1979) in their professional development models for teachers declare that mature professionals guide their actions by internalized beliefs. Wiles and Bondi (1979) propose that in view of the multiplicity of choices which face teachers it is important that they understand their own values and beliefs about education. Dobson and Dobson (1983) conclude that real improvement in education will occur only when educators experience belief-practice congruency.

Several studies have identified teachers' perceptions as an important variable in effective decision-making (Combs et al., 1969; Usher and Hanke, 1971; Brophy and Good, 1974; Goddlad, 1974; Shulman and Elstein, 1975; Shavelson, 1983).

Harste and Burke (1977) hypothesized that teachers make decisions about reading instruction based on the theory, or assumptions they hold about reading and learning. They proposed that a teacher's theoretical orientation influences goals and expectancies, procedures, material selections and classroom interaction patterns.

While research into the decision-making aspects of teaching has been carried out, few studies have investigated the relationship between teachers' implicit theories or beliefs and their teaching practices or the factors which influence the implementation of beliefs. In this chapter, the literature pertaining to teacher beliefs and practices will be discussed in three main areas: the general teaching context, in the language arts field, and within the written language setting.

Beliefs and Practices in Teaching

Some general studies have been carried out to investigate the understandings, constructs or perspectives that influence classroom behaviour. Three studies represent the research in this area.

Bussis, Chittenden and Amarel (1976), through in-depth interviews with 60 elementary school teachers involved in an "open education" approach to instruction, investigated the internalized understandings and constructs that influenced the teachers' behaviours in the classroom. The underlying assumption of the study was that "internal mental processes (understandings, beliefs and values) are major determinants of behaviour as well as the environments people create around themselves" (p. 1).

In analyzing the interview protocol, Bussis and colleagues constructed coding systems to categorize the teachers' beliefs in four areas: teachers' understandings of curriculum, teachers' understandings of children, the importance of children's interests and choices, and the place of social interaction in learning. Within each area, teachers were grouped into one of four groups according to the construct system that characterized their professed beliefs and their corresponding observed practices.

In the area of teachers' understandings of curriculum group one (12% of teachers) had "grade-level facts and skills" as a dominant priority with little evidence of new methods in surface curriculum compared to what teachers had previously practiced. Group 2 (22%) also had "grade-level facts and skills" as the dominant priority; however, considerable change and experimentation was evidenced in surface curriculum. The third group (39%) expressed "grade level facts and skills" as a priority but it was not a dominant priority. Their surface curriculum provided many rich and interesting experiences for children. Group 4 (45%) showed little evidence of "grade-level and skills" dominance, and like group three, provided opportunities for students to experience a rich surface curriculum.

The analysis of children's needs and feelings showed that for 20% of the teachers, needs and feelings were only remotely perceived, or perceived as unreal; 15% perceived needs and feelings as real and desirable of expression but hindered learning; 32% saw the expression of needs and feelings as a necessary context for learning and 33% saw these qualities as being inseparable from and integral to the learning process.

The third area dealt with teachers' perceptions of children's interests and choices, a concept that guides learning in the open education philosophy. Orientation A teachers (20%) talked about choice and interest in a limited way. Orientation B teachers (30%) believed that valuable learning did occur when students pursued their own interests (in group settings) but choice was restricted to "enrichment" work only and held no place in core areas. Orientation C teachers 22%) saw interest and choice in terms of individuals rather than groups and considered them related to core as well as elective subject areas. This group took student interests at face value and utilized it to further skills but also suspected interests were influenced by peer pressure or attractiveness of materials. Orientation D teachers (28%) assumed all children possessed interests which were continuous but resilient. They considered children's interests as integral to learning and saw their role as one of identifying and stimulating these interests.

In the area of social interaction teachers varied in the amount of group work and student interaction permitted in their classroom according to their different beliefs. Category A teachers (18%) did not perceive interaction as significant for learning. Category B teachers (5%) saw interaction as potentially interfering with learning, Category C teachers (37%) perceived interaction as children learning from one another and Category D teachers (40%) thought of learning, both personal and cognitive, as highly social in character. Bussis and colleagues concluded that teachers who are aware of the connections between beliefs and planned activities (a clue to practice) are better able to implement their beliefs.

This conclusion is based on self-reported teaching practices which may not be an accurate reflection of actual practice; consequently, further research is needed to support this finding.

Ross (1979) conducted an ethnographic study involving three kindergarten teachers to investigate the relationship between teachers' beliefs and practices. During six to eight weeks of observations in each class, information about teaching practices was recorded in field note form. Formal and informal interviews were conducted with teachers, principals and students to obtain information about each teacher's beliefs, the teaching contexts and the impact of practice on children. Interview questions, patterned after those developed by Bussis et al. (1976) assessed beliefs indirectly by obtaining opinions about various educational issues. Classroom artifacts such as student work, plan books, texts, tests and report cards were collected and examined to enhance the understanding of the teacher's classroom practices and factors that might influence those practices.

The findings showed that the three teachers differed in both their beliefs about teaching and children and in their abilities to implement those beliefs. The following example serves to illustrate the importance of clearly defined beliefs as they relate to practices. In one classroom the teacher believed that grouping children was unnecessary due to the lack of real academic work done in kindergarten, yet practices revealed that children did written exercises, practiced number, letter and sound recognition, matched rhyming words and did sequencing activities - activities that can certainly be considered academic. The teacher further stated that grouping is unnecessary as children need the opportunity to select their own activities and create their own groups. However, the teacher had children seated at tables completing teacher assigned tasks. Ross determined that four factors seemed important in understanding a teacher's ability to implement beliefs: 1) clarity of beliefs, 2) the ability to perceive connections between beliefs and practices identified previously as important, 3) an awareness and thorough understanding of possible alternative practices, and 4) the teacher's perception of the beliefs of school system officials.

Janesick (cited in Conners, 1982) attempted to describe and explain a teacher's classroom perspective by carrying out an ethnographic study. For the purpose of that study, a perspective was defined as "a combination of beliefs and behaviours which were composed of definitions of situations, actions and criteria for making judgements" (p. 52). The perspective was derived through reflection and social interpretation of the teacher's interactions in the classroom environment and formed the basis from which the individual's actions were performed. The perspective, Janesick suggested, enabled the teacher to monitor his classroom, interpret it and perform his practices within it.

Over a seven month period, one teacher was observed. Data, in the form of field notes and recorded interviews with the teacher, was analyzed weekly to discover patterns, relationships or behaviours that warranted further investigation. On completion of field work, a final analysis was carried out.

In this study, Janesick concluded that the teacher's perspective indicated a concern for creating and maintaining a stable, cohesive group in order that stated classroom goals might be attained. This group perspective led the teacher to concentrate on various components of group life. He modelled group leadership qualities and behaviours and had students participate in many group activities as a means of working towards his goals of respect and cooperation.

These studies seemed to indicate that a relationship does exist between a teacher's beliefs and general classroom practices and that practices do vary according to beliefs. Also it was found that implementation of practices are influenced by many factors. The need to explore the existence of a similar relationship between beliefs and practices in various subject areas is warranted.

Beliefs and Practices in Language Arts

Few studies have focused specifically on teachers' beliefs in the language arts area; however, an extensive longitudinal study of elementary teachers' beliefs in the reading area has been carried out (Johnston, 1977; Duffy, 1977; Barr and Duffy, 1978; Buike and Duffy, 1979). Initially, the study set out to investigate what conceptual or belief systems teachers possessed in the reading area, and if they existed, whether these beliefs influenced teaching practices, and ultimately, growth in the reading abilities of pupils. Using a Propositional Sort Instrument and a variation of Kelly's (1955) Role Concept Repertory Test, Duffy and colleagues identified eleven teachers who evidenced strong belief patterns. Observations were carried out using ethnographic field notes while pre- and post- observation interviews were utilized to determine the degree to which teachers instructional behaviours reflected their conceptions of reading. Case studies of these teachers led the researchers to conclude that teachers' belief systems are more complex than initially realized, that is, beliefs about one aspect of instruction may not accurately predict beliefs about another aspect. Secondly, they stated that beliefs influence teacher selection of materials and the way they help students during reading and thirdly, that institutional and classroom characteristics mediate the influence of beliefs. For example, time schedules, required testing, class composition and limitations on materials were found to influence the full operationalizing of teachers' reading beliefs.

Continued research by Buike and Duffy (1978) saw a modification in data collection and analysis. Data regarding beliefs were collected using the triangulation principle of employing three sources of data: formal interviews, informal interviews, and teacher comments during classroom instruction. Statements were categorized and those categories containing five or more teacher statements were deemed to be part of that teacher's belief or conception. Data on teachers' instructional practices were collected from three sources: field notes, audio-taped reading lessons and records of student activity during the reading period. The two sets of data were compared and if at least five activities were observed which reflected a category or if time spent in reading activities reflected a category, the instructional practices were considered to be guided by the teacher's belief. Findings indicated that classroom teachers do have conceptions of reading. However, these conceptions were not simple but were comprised of a combination of theoretical views. Furthermore, they changed with grade or ability level and were not related in a linear fashion to instructional behaviours. It was found that often non-reading conceptions (e.g. classroom management, attitude towards children) tended to dominate reading conceptions and that grade or ability levels would change a teacher's reading conceptions. The findings refute Harste and Burke's (1977) hypothesis that teachers operate from an implicit theory of reading. Duffy and colleagues concluded that "the relationship between a teacher's reading beliefs and his/her instructional decision-making appears to be fluid; a teacher's conception of reading is a 'free-floating' element which has little meaning until it has filtered through the teacher's non-reading conceptions and is applied to specific teaching context" (p.9).

Myers and Ringler (1980) carried out a study with 60 graduate level students (referred to as 'interns') enrolled in a reading clinic course to determine whether their theoretical reading concepts were reflected in practices. Interns responded in writing to a number of questions targetted at discerning their concepts of reading and the reading process. A case study of an 11-year-old sixth grader was presented to the interns; included was a summary of standardized and informal test data, informal reading inventories and miscue analyses. Interns were asked to study the case and prioritize their diagnostic hypotheses and intervention strategies that they would recommend. Then concepts of the reading process were categorizd as being either top-down, bottom-up or interactive, as were diagnostic analyses and recommendations for intervention. Findings showed that while 50% of the participants ascribed to an interactive model of reading; only one-third showed an interactive approach to diagnosis and intervention. All but one of these teacher interns had no previous teaching experience. Further examination revealed that 40 of the 60 interns indicated a bottom-up approach to diagnosis and teaching but 19 of these ascribed to an interactive approach. The majority of this group of 40 were experienced teachers. It would appear that experienced teachers bring from their background a number of structured strategies and processes that reinforce a bottom-up model likely influenced by the emphasis on a diagnostic-prescriptive model of teaching currently in use with many published materials. None of the ten teachers who ascribed to top-down concepts of the reading process stated diagnostic hypotheses or teaching strategies to reflect that model. Myers and Ringler concluded that establishing a conscious awareness of conceptual schema must be a prerequisite for further learning or for reconstruction of a belief system as a teacher's knowledge base increases.

Methany (1979) surveyed two hundred Michigan classroom teachers regarding their beliefs about reading. Findings indicated that teachers may shift their reading beliefs as they move from lower elementary grades to upper elementary grades or vice versa. Teachers in the K-3 grades tended to have skills oriented beliefs while teachers in grades 4-6 had more pupil-centred, interest-based approaches to reading.

Methany (1980) continued his research with nine teachers in grades one and two who were participating in the Conceptions of Reading Project. These teachers were known to group students for reading instruction. Each teacher was interviewed and audiotaped as she stated her reading beliefs for five varied groups of readers: her lowest reading group, her highest reading group, her whole class, an upper elementary class, and finally, a class from a socioeconomic background different to that in which she was currently teaching.

Teachers were given eight sets of criteria [1) criteria for judging pupil reading success; 2) criteria for selecting materials; 3) criteria for forming instructional groups; 4) time allocation to reading activities; 5) time allocation to pupils; 6) favored word recognition prompts; 7) comprehension emphasis; and 8) favored instructional role] and were allowed to generate as many statements as they wished in order to convey their beliefs. Each teacher's statements about her lowest reading group were compared to those for the other group as these provided the most contrast and a tally was taken.

Results indicated that compared to beliefs about their lowest group, 83% held different beliefs for upper-grade readers, 77% held different beliefs for top readers, 73% held dissimilar beliefs for readers from high SES backgrounds and 36% viewed their whole class differently than their lowest group. This analysis supported the hypothesis that teachers' reading beliefs varied across specific reading subgroups. Teachers also believed that kinds of comprehension and word recognition cues should vary from group to group with low readers and low-SES readers receiving simple factual, low-level comprehension exercises and phonetic-type cues and high-SES, top group and upper-grade readers receiving high-level comprehension activities with contextual cues. In addition, the former group was believed to need more direct instructional time where the teacher acted as a controller and step-by-step director contrastingly in the latter group, the teacher's role was one of passive guide-facilitator. Methany concluded by stating that teacher's reading beliefs are a function of their expectations for different kinds of readers and are not based on theoretical reading models.

Deford (1985) recognized that the past difficulty in exploring the relationship between teachers' behaviours and theoretical orientations lay in the lack of a consistent and reliable measure of teachers' belief systems. Her study validated an instrument, the Deford Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP), a Likert scale response system to determine a teacher's beliefs about practices in reading instruction. The TORP was administered to 90 teachers who had been identified by reading coordinators or professionals in the field as holding either phonics, skills, or whole language orientations to reading instruction. Responses to the 26-item TORP indicated that it was a reliable measure (r=.98) of differences in reading theoretical orientation. The greatest scoring difference occurred between the whole language and phonics groups while the skills group exhibited the greatest variance in scores. Within each subgroup, the whole language and phonics groups registered the least group variability while the skills group showed higher standard deviations. The whole language group was most unified in agreeing strongly with their own item grouping and most strongly opposed to practices in the phonic grouping. The phonics group showed consistent agreement with practices in its own item grouping and was most strongly opposed to those in the whole language grouping while showing moderate agreement with the practices in the skills grouping. The skills group responses were generally moderate to items but registered strongest disagreement to whole language practices.

Two additional tests of the TORP were conducted to check its consistency. First three judges in the form of professionals in the field were asked to respond to the TORP three different times, each time from a different reading orientation perspective. Response patterns indicated that the three judges concurred on phonics, skills and whole language models of reading. Next 14 teachers were observed teaching reading by three observers who then tried to predict teacher responses on the TORP. Following actual teacher response to the TORP, total scores of the teachers were rank-ordered with the corresponding observer's responses and the two sets of scores were correlated. There was a significant match (.86) between observer response/teacher behaviour.

Deford concluded that the TORP was a reliable, valid instrument for discriminating teachers as to their theoretical orientation to reading. However, she recommended it be used in conjunction with interviews and observations which would confirm a teacher's orientations and practices. Deford calls for further research in the area of understanding how theory is generated, modified and practiced, research that will further our understanding of the learning process.

Summary

The four studies reviewed in this section have emphasized the importance of teacher-held beliefs as determinants of action. They have indicated that teachers' beliefs are complex and influenced by the environments in which they work and the students with whom they work. the need to comprehend one's beliefs was underlined as a key factor in expanding learning or changing belief systems. The TORP instrument was shown to be a valid measure of a teacher's theoretical orientation in reading.

Beliefs and Practices in Writing

Even less research has investigated teacher beliefs in the area of writing. Jeffery (1981) conducted a survey of grade 10-12 teachers' and students' perceptions of writing in four project schools in Western Australia. Teachers and students responded at length to an open-ended questionnaire. Broad categories on the teacher questionnaire included kinds of writing teachers set, aims of writing, contexts for writing, impressions of writing in grades 10, 11, 12, and changes which should occur across grades 10-12. Teachers responding to the questionnaire came from all subject areas. Student questionnaires covered areas such as kinds of writing done/like to be done, aims of writing, context for writing and changes or developments which have recently occurred in writing.

Results indicated that in many respects students' and teachers' perceptions of the kinds of writing tasks done in class and the aims for writing were markedly different. Where teachers perceived that they set a variety of tasks aimed at displaying knowledge or shaping knowledge, students saw writing tasks to be mainly essay-type for the purpose of skill-development , assessment, or time-filler. Student and teacher perceptions of writing context were very similar. For example, they both saw the most common lead-ins to writing as being discussion or reading followed by discussions. Students perceived more "methods" leading to writing than teachers. Both perceived most of the written work done in school as being marked.

Teachers' impressions of student writing were generally negative, but did tend to get less negative as grade level increased. Teachers and students seemed generally to have dissimilar perceptions about the changes that do or should take place between years 10 and 12. Teachers focused to a large degree on increasing maturity evidenced by greater perception and imagination, greater control of language, more conciseness, greater sophistication and increasing objectivity. Students tended to see changes more personally and most frequently mentioned "improvement," changes in attitude, longer writing, increased humour, increased understanding of a subject area and writing becoming easier. Teachers identified conditions which prevented changes from occurring. Most of the blame was laid on deficiencies in students: lack of ability or motivation. Other factors included the "system," lack of diagnostic materials, lack of time, and the teachers themselves. Jeffery concluded by calling for increased dialogue between teachers and students as a means of communicating perceptions of aims and writing tasks.

Recognizing a need for a major review of instructional practices, Appleby et al. (1981) undertook a study in two parts to investigate current writing practices in American schools. The first strand of the study, involving 68 teachers in 2 high schools teaching 259 randomly selected lessons, focused on writing assignments and their related instruction. Data was obtained regarding the role of writing in the schools, attitudes and practices of teachers in a variety of subject areas, and student reactions to writing. The study found that of all instructional time, writing constituted forty-five percent (45%) but only three percent (3%) of observed class time was devoted to writing of at least paragraph length. Frequently used writing-related activities were heavily weighted towards mechanical writing tasks such as writing without composing. Only about one-third of the teachers surveyed said that they asked students to frequently write at greater than paragraph length. Topics for writing indicated an emphasis on writing for the "teacher-as-examiner." Student descriptions of writing tasks paralleled observer reports: writing was generally used for note-taking, imaginative use of writing was limited mostly to English classes, and personal writing was non-existent.

Instructional practices were analyzed in terms of the support they gave to the three stages of composing: prewriting, writing and editing. The study showed that prewriting activities were limited. In most cases, little discussion about approaches or information occurred; explicit guidelines were directed towards length of the assignment. "In a typical assignment, just over three minutes elapsed from the time the teacher began to discuss or pass out the assignment until students began writing (p. 80). Some prewriting practices identified included modelling of successful task performance, group discussions, comprehension exercises on new material and analysis of qualities of successful writing. Activities designed to help students while writing were "almost nonexistent" (p. 80). About one-third of teachers reported breaking assignments into stages to simplify the task while just under 30% required students to work on more than one draft of their writing. Teacher comments and corrections constituted the major portion of the editing stage of writing. Mechanical errors were most frequently reported as the focus of teacher responses while comments regarding content were least frequently reported.

The study concluded with suggestions for improvement in secondary school writing. The first step called for increased opportunities for students to use writing as a tool for learning, rather than as a way for displaying required knowledge. This would require further work in developing practical descriptions of activities and techniques to incorporate into the content areas. Secondly, teachers need to be made aware of recent research into the composing process. A framework within which they could analyze the writing context needs to be developed. Finally, teachers need to provide contexts in which writing served its natural communicative function rather than solely as a display of information.

Searle and Dillion (1983) have examined the nature of teachers' beliefs about writing as one component of a study on teacher responses to student writing. Five teachers, using approximately 20 writing samples from their classes, were led through a Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure (based on Kelly's personal construct theory) in order to formulate a hierarchy of constructs or beliefs about student writing. An individual profile of each teacher's practices was compiled based on observations, interviews and samples of student work. Six students from each class were interviewed to determine student perceptions of the program and the way teacher comments helped them to write better. In this way, several perspectives from which to describe and discuss the teacher's program were obtained. This phase of the study ultimately led the researchers to analyze how each teacher's responses fitted into the teacher's goals, beliefs and practices. No summary conclusions were formulated but several observations were made. They included:

1. Pupils focus on what teachers teach. For this reason teachers need to have a clear understanding of their beliefs concerning writing.

2. A teacher's procedures remain constant.

3. Teachers act on goals but not necessarily on beliefs. It is conceivable that goals may emerge from practice.

4. The Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedures seem to be excellent devices to help teachers discover and discuss their own beliefs.

The researchers concluded by recognizing the need for further research in this area.

Ray, Lea and Stansell (1985) conducted an observational study of one third grade teacher as she changed her classroom practices to reflect a theoretical change in writing instruction (as prompted by a graduate course). Observations of the teacher during writing class were made on a regular basis and discussions with the teacher were held throughout the observation period. As the study progressed, the teacher agreed to have one researcher demonstrate procedures in the class. At the conclusion of the study the researchers realized that, though some new methods had been attempted, the teacher had really not changed her initial theory of writing instruction and that it was still governing her teaching. The researchers concluded that, although theories can change in response to coursework or other professional experiences, exposure to a theory is not tantamount to acceptance of that theory. Much still needs to be learned about the process whereby an individual teacher abandons a theory and assumes another.

Edelsberg (1985) conducted a survey in Central Ohio of 18 "master" teachers of composition (as identified by administrators) and five administrators to ascertain how educators were developing writing programs and instructing composition. Teachers responded to a six-item questionnaire while administrators answered the same questionnaire plus an additional four-question survey. Edelsberg found that beliefs about how students learn to write was "remarkably consistent among the 18 master teachers." Most teachers recognized that students' personal experiences served as the source of ideas for writing. They valued a safe classroom environment where students were allowed to "make false starts, take risks and confer directly with peers and the teacher." These teachers believed that students "learn to write by writing." They viewed writing as developmental, related to fluency in reading, listening and speaking, and promoted by self-initiated, regular reading in varied genres.

Responses to the survey illustrated that significant differences existed in the ways these teachers taught writing. Some stated that they followed the process model which "advocates ample practice in prewriting, drafting, revising and editing." Publishing for varied audiences was also encouraged. These teachers were described as being child-centred, showing a sensitivity to individuals and the complexity of the composing process and understanding the social nature of writing. This description typified the elementary/middle school teachers in the study.

Other teachers were described as "traditional writing instructors." These teachers were content-centred and placed importance on rules, forms and formats. Writing skills were seen to develop and accumulate through routinized repetition of mechanistic tasks. There was little feel for the social nature of writing. This description typified more high school teachers in the study. Neither type of teacher used computers as a teaching or management tool. Teachers named several sources of influence on their teaching practices. These included current authors such as Britton, Graves, and Murray, effective administrators and inservice programs. Edelsberg concludes that, "the teaching of writing is changing substantially, but if it is to have a widespread effect, program administrators will have to participate together with master teachers to further professional and curriculum development."

The five studies presented in this section indicate the insufficiency of research conducted in the area of teacher beliefs and practices in writing. Pedagogy in the field of writing is currently undergoing a significant change in emphasis from product to process and researchers are recognizing the need for further research in this area in particular as it pertains to beliefs about writing and how these translate into practice.

To date, research has shown that a consideration of teachers' belief systems is relevant to our understanding of the teaching process. However what seems to be most apparent is the deficiency of research that explores the relationship between teacher's beliefs and practices. This study will attempt to further knowledge in this area, particularly with regard to the nature of the relationship as found in the area of writing instruction.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH PROCEDURES AND DESIGN

I. Introduction

This chapter delineates the research design and procedures. The population and sampling is discussed along with instrumentation adapted for this study. A pilot study is reported followed by a notation of the decisions made on the basis of the pilot study. Finally, the treatment of the data is explained.

II. Nature of the Study

A case study approach was selected for this investigation because it permitted an in-depth examination of individual teacher's practices and beliefs. The study is generally descriptive in nature. Data for the teacher profiles was obtained from researcher observations, informal discussions, and the questionnaire. Both the researcher's and the teacher's viewings of the videotaped lessons, the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure, and the questionnaire were used to identify teacher instructional practices and beliefs.

III. Population and Sample

The population for this study consisted of elementary classroom teachers (Grades 1 - 6) in the Edmonton Public School System during the 1983-84 school year. The sample was obtained from this population on a voluntary basis. A sample size of six to eight teachers was deemed appropriate as this number would be large enough to yield data from a variety of teacher-classroom situations and yet not prove too unwieldy for analysis. The results may only be generalized to the sample involved.

The sample was obtained by the following procedure. Permission was obtained to conduct the study in Edmonton Public Schools. Target schools were identified by the Language Arts Supervisor for the Edmonton Public schools on the basis of prior involvement or interest in writing as part of the language arts curriculum. The researcher initially contacted the principals of these schools in order to ascertain teacher interest in the project. Four subjects indicated an interest. The researcher then approached other schools within the system in order to obtain a complement to the sample. Later, an informal meeting with each teacher served to acquaint each participant more fully with the nature of the study as well as to receive confirmation of their willingness to participate.

Because data collection involved videotaping within each classroom, permission was obtained from parents to have their child present in the classroom while research was being conducted (See Appendix A). The teachers agreed to distribute and collect the consent forms. In those few cases where permission was not obtained, teachers cooperated by making alternate arrangements for those individuals.

IV. Instrumentation

The Repertory Grid (Bannister, 1968) and Laddering Procedure (Hinkle, 1968) are two techniques based on Kelly's (1955) personal construct theory which are designed to reveal an individual's constructs or beliefs on a certain aspect of life. A modification of the techniques in this study led subjects to identify the constructs of their beliefs about writing. Each teacher, with reference to writing samples from students in his/her class, was asked to identify qualities which he/she valued or of which he/she disapproved in the writing. If subjects identified qualities of which they disapproved, they were asked later to state the polar positive quality so that the laddering procedure could proceed using the valued qualities. These qualities are considered to be subordinate constructs of the individual's belief system.

The Laddering Procedure further probed these values to expose underlying assumptions. The technique involved asking subjects why they valued certain qualities, and further why they valued each justification they gave, until the subject believed the rationale was self-evident; that is, they could no longer give a justification. The process reduced the subordinate constructs to a smaller number belief statements. These final statements constituted the superordinate constructs of the subject's belief system.

A general questionnaire (see Appendix B) aimed at discerning a teacher's basic approach to writing was constructed. The intended purpose was to acquaint the researcher with the teacher's overall approach and yearly organizational plan in order to ascertain where and how videotaped lessons fit in. To this end, it was deemed necessary to include sections on goals and aims of the writing program, types of writing activities, scheduling and routines of the writing classes. Questions were designed to be open-ended so as to allow for personal comments by the teacher.

The questionnaire was field-tested by one elementary school staff prior to implementation in the study. Feedback enabled the researcher to modify and clarify some sections of the questionnaire. The staff concluded that the revised questionnaire would provide adequate opportunities for a teacher to expound on her approaches to teaching writing.

V. Procedures for Data Collection

Instructional Practices

In order to collect data on instructional practices used by each teacher in the writing component of the language arts curriculum, two procedures were employed. Firstly, two lessons which ultimately led to extended writing by students were videotaped for each teacher. Teachers had been reassured that the researcher was not looking for 'particular' methods or practices and that no 'special' preparation was necessary; as such, the lessons were part of the regularly scheduled curriculum of studies. Lessons varied in length from twenty minutes to one hour.

Subsequent to the actual technical videotaping of each lesson, the researcher viewed the videotape to record practices and strategies the teacher employed. The record took the form of a log which briefly described actions in sequential order. Corresponding videotape counter numbers were noted to facilitate the location of practices for subsequent reference. Later, these practices were transferred into a table of Researcher-Perceived Practices along with quotations from the teacher, where possible, to validate or illustrate the noted practice.

Each teacher, together with the researcher, viewed the videotape of his/her lesson. Teachers had been asked to look for and comment on practices and strategies they employed. Prior to each session, teachers were instructed to stop the videotape at points where they considered their instructional practices to have changed. They had been advised that the researcher might also stop the videotape at certain points to ask, "What are you doing here?" It was indicated that often it might appear obvious what the teacher was doing, but that the researcher wanted the explanations to be in the teacher's own words. This information allowed the researcher to glean an understanding of the teacher's perceptions of his/her teaching as well as a rationale for certain instructional behaviors. The viewing took place either later on the same day as taping or the next school day, according to the teacher's personal schedule. Each session was audiotaped and later transcribed. Later, the transcribed script was probed for teacher-identified practices which were tabled in sequential order along with teacher comments about the identified practices.

Secondly, teachers responded to a general questionnaire which elicited their philosophical and practical orientations to writing. Teachers were informed that the questionnaire was meant to supplement the two videotaped lessons as a source of teaching practices. They were asked to keep in mind all the writing activities that their students engaged in during the year and to give as many responses in each section that held true for them. The questionnaire was administered to teachers after all other data had been collected. Teachers were given several days to complete the questionnaire before it was collected.

Belief Systems

Data on values and beliefs was obtained using the Repertory Grid (Bannister, 1968) and Laddering Procedure (Hinkle, 1968). Teachers were asked to bring ten to twenty samples of student writing to this session. These served to stimulate the teachers in identifying qualities of which they approved (valued) or disapproved in their students' written work. The researcher kept notes of the qualities teachers mentioned and whenever possible, used the exact wording teachers had used. Teachers were asked to confirm the accuracy and the wording of the statements the researcher noted. Since the Laddering Procedure would progress from the value-oriented or positive pole of the quality, teachers were asked, when they indicated a quality they disapproved of, to state the corresponding opposite positive quality. For example, if a teacher mentioned that she disapproved of messy handwriting, the corresponding positive quality (neat handwriting) was elicited. The procedure continued until teachers had considered all the samples they had brought or until no other new qualities could be identified.

The Laddering Procedure proceeded immediately after the Repertory Grid exercise. Teachers were instructed that the researcher would present each valued quality in turn and ask why the subject felt it was important or why they valued that quality. As each justification was given, they would be asked to state why they felt it (the justification) was important or why they valued it. This procedure continued until the subject could no longer qualify his/her justification. A hypothetical example was presented to illustrate the procedure. Teachers were reassured that, in probing, the researcher was neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statements.

The researcher noted the final statement, or superordinate construct, using the teacher's exact wording. In some instances, some modification was necessary for the sake of brevity or clarity. In these cases, the approval for the final wording of the belief statement was obtained from the teacher.

Researcher's Journal

During the time in the classroom, the researcher kept field notes regarding the general atmosphere of the class, its physical layout, evidence of writing on display, attitude and involvement of students and other factors that were deemed significant to the general classroom climate. Further informal comments made by the teacher were noted to supplement formal data.

VI. Field Testing and Pilot Study

Prior to formal data collection, field testing in two stages was undertaken to determine the appropriateness of methods and procedures. In the first stage, the focus was placed on the suitability of the questionnaire. One elementary school staff was approached to survey and provide feedback on the teacher questionnaire. On the basis of these teachers' comments, some questions were reworded for clarity or deleted altogether. Further questions were added to make the questionnaire more comprehensive. Following modification of the format, the general consensus reached was that the questionnaire would adequately provide the background information the researcher required.

In the second stage of field testing, a pilot study was carried out with one elementary school teacher. The researcher followed a proposed schedule of videotaping and interviews in order to test its appropriateness. The teacher also responded to the questionnaire and completed the Repertory Grid and Laddering exercise. The researcher gained further familiarity with the videotape equipment.

On the basis of the pilot study, the following decisions were made.

1. A pre-lesson videotaping session for the teacher and students would be beneficial to acclimatize both to the presence of the videotaping equipment in the room. As well, a viewing of the tape, especially for the teacher, was found to be necessary; this provided a time for the teacher to note particular behaviors of students and personal traits, the perceptions of which tended to interfere with the viewing for instructional practices.

2. Informal discussions prior to and for brief spans during interviews, helped to minimize teachers' inhibitions and maximized their willingness to share with the researcher.

3. A re-ordering of the steps in the process was deemed advantageous. The pilot teacher expressed the concern that a more leisurely time was necessary to respond to the questionnaire. For this reason, the questionnaire was given at the conclusion of the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure and collected from the teacher several days later.

4. Care would have to be taken to avoid filming into a major light source as this marred the quality of the videotaped picture.

5. While audiotaping teacher comments on the

videotaped lessons, care would have to be taken to place the microphone away from the videotaping equipment which produced an audible hum.

6. The proposed method for data analysis (which involved the plotting of beliefs and practices on a four-quadrant chart to differentiate between child/content and process/product centered orientations) would not be feasible. It was noted that often the teacher's belief statements left the educational realm and became "life" or "societal" beliefs. It would be impossible to classify such statements in the narrow constraints originally perceived by the researcher. The decision to treat each subject as an individual descriptive case study was made.

VII. Treatment of the Data

Upon completion of videotaping, each lesson was viewed by the researcher. This viewing took place prior to teacher interaction in an attempt to maintain impartiality on the part of the researcher. As each tape was examined, the researcher prepared a log of perceivable practices. Tape counter numbers were noted beside each description of action. Later, the descriptions of perceivable practices were transferred into a sequentially-ordered table of researcher-perceived practices. At this time, with reference to the counter-numbers, the tape was viewed again to obtain, where possible, verbatim statements made by the teacher to illustrate or confirm the perceived practice. These quotations were added to the table beside their corresponding action. This process yielded a list of researcher-based perceptions of the teacher's instructional practices.

Within a twenty-four hour period following the taping of each lesson, the teacher and researcher together viewed the videotape. During this session the teacher had been asked to identify instructional practices and strategies used. The dialogue was audiotaped and later transcribed. The transcript was examined by the researcher for statements which identified particular practices. These statements were recorded verbatim in table form. In addition, comments and explanations made by the teacher during the viewing were noted in a separate column when they added clarification to the practice statement. A referent column was introduced by the researcher because in some cases, the actual teacher statement did not establish a referent. For example, "trying very hard to bring the children to the same sort of ground level, knowledge-wise" takes on more meaning when it is known to be made in reference to a discussion of recipes. This process yielded a list of teacher-based perceptions of instructional practices.

Data from the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure was arranged in tabular form. Superordinate constructs (belief statements) were listed in the right-hand column; in the left-hand column were grouped all the subordinate constructs (values) which ultimately corresponded to each belief statement. The format permitted the researcher to see that, often, several surface values were governed by the same internal belief.

Superordinate construct statements generated by each teacher were transferred onto file cards along with their corresponding subordinate constructs. The researcher then probed the practices data (researcher-perceived practices, teacher-perceived practices, questionnaire) to find negating or supporting evidence for each belief statement. Citations were color-coded as to their source (teacher or researcher). An analysis of beliefs and practices was made and reported using as many specific references as possible. The extent of congruence between an individual teacher's practices and beliefs was determined by examining the strength of support in terms of practices for each belief statement.

Data from the questionnaire and the researcher's journal was consolidated to produce a profile of each individual teacher. The profile included a description of present classroom, the student population, and an overview of the writing program.

Data from across all case studies was analyzed in reference to the research questions. Information from individual cases was pooled and reorganized to ascertain similarities and differences in beliefs and practices. Prevalent patterns amongst the cases was identified and the degree of congruence was determined.

In this chapter, the design of the study has been described. Details of field testing and the resulting decisions made were reported. Instrumentation adapted for this study as well as methods of data collection have been explained, followed by a description of the data analysis procedures used for each case study. The following chapter presents the case studies in detail.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CASE STUDIES

Overview

In this chapter, a report of six case studies is made. Code names have been assigned to each teacher to ensure anonymity. Due to technical difficulties, complete data on the seventh case study was not obtained and the decision was made to exclude it from the research study.

Each case study begins with a description of the class setting as observed by the researcher. Further observations supplemented by teacher comments, attempt to describe the student population and their orientation to writing in the classroom. Then a general overview of each teacher's writing program is presented. Information was gleaned from the teacher questionnaire and informal discussions between the teacher and the researcher. The purpose of this section was to present a picture of the year-long writing program. Instructional practices as perceived by the teacher and the researcher respectively are in the tables which follow each case study, along with a brief summary of each. The two video-taped lessons provided the stimulus for each teacher to identify and comment on particular instructional practices he/she employed in his/her teaching. In general, the lessons were taped on consecutive days except where scheduling of in-school programs precluded it. The two videotaped lessons were also viewed by the researcher in order to ascertain practices used by each teacher. This viewing took place prior to teacher-viewing and reaction in an effort to maintain neutrality to identifiable practices.

The Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure yielded a number of values and beliefs held by each teacher. These are reported in table form. Both the subordinate constructs (valued features of writing) and their related superordinate constructs (belief statements) are recorded verbatim from the taped interview with each teacher.

Each case study concludes with an analysis of the relationship between the teacher's beliefs and practices.

Teacher Profile #1: Mrs. P.

Classroom Description and Observations

Mrs. P.'s grade one class was housed in a self-contained classroom. Desks were arranged in a U-shape in front of the blackboard while a group-sharing space was located in a rear corner. Several tables and centers occupied the rear and sides of the room. A large display of books on the current theme was available on a rear counter. Displays of rhyming words occupied one wall and several pocket charts, experience charts, and models relating to the theme were visible. Student writing was displayed on a wall outside the classroom.

Mrs. P. described her students as a heterogeneous group from upper-middle to lower-middle class backgrounds. Children were orderly and quiet but participated willingly in oral discussions. Most children began to write soon after the task was set and continued to write except for brief interruptions by the teacher or to converse quietly with a neighbor. Writing was often a choice made by students during center time or free time.

Overview of the Writing Program

The questionnaire provided a general overview of Mrs. P.'s writing program. She indicated that writing was the central, primary focus of the day. Mrs. P. stated that she structured learning experiences using an integrated thematic approach that allowed her to incorporate writing into several subject areas. As such, writing did not occur only in a scheduled block of time but throughout the morning and afternoon for approximately two hours daily.

Mrs. P. saw the main purposes for writing in her classroom as 1) a means of communicating ideas and feelings; 2) a way of learning the conventions of writing; and 3) as another more meaningful source of reading material. She aimed to increase the quantity of her students' writing and to help students develop more independence, first, in writing, and later, in proofreading their own work. She felt this would provide her with a better means of evaluating their comprehension. She stated, "I believe that if a child can write a sensible sentence, he comprehends what he has written." Mrs. P. felt that the writing experiences she provided enabled her students to express themselves, experiment with language, read, and most importantly, feel good about themselves.

Mrs. P. described her general approach to writing as "non-threatening but challenging." She indicated that her expectations differed for children as "some children can write well ... others have difficulty so I expect a bit less, but enough to challenge them." Mrs. P. indicated that her students were involved in a variety of writing experiences. These included journals (free writing/free choice); following models of poems, frame sentences, stories and recipes; letters; and reports (factual information discussed on the theme.)

Mrs. P.'s responses to the questionnaire emphasized that considerable oral work preceded written work. When the writing task involved following a model of a poem, sentence or story, she usually began with a directed lesson that might include reading a story orally, brainstorming for words or ideas, or doing examples of a frame structure. Students might be involved in oral discussions, brainstorming sessions, manipulative exercises with words in in the pocket charts or oral practice with the model. Journal writing was self-directed. Other writing tasks were based on the theme or some other mutually agreeable topic. Mrs. P. acknowledged that she engaged primarily in two activities while students were writing. Initially, she walked around the room reinforcing children's efforts or interacting with students who were experiencing difficulties. In such cases, Mrs. P. said she would talk to students to make sure they understood the task, to help them organize their thoughts or to work through a model orally or manipulatively (pocket chart) with them. She stated,"I believe that often if a child is having difficulty, he requires more oral work to verbalize his ideas, to organize his thoughts."

Once students had settled into writing, Mrs. P. explained that she would sit at her desk or a table and meet with individuals who had finished. Each child would read what he had written, then together they edited and proof-read the work. Mrs. P. felt that as students read they usually could pick up on errors in punctuation, spelling or grammar.

Mrs. P. stated that almost all student writing was shared at the end of the writing period. The class would meet in the story corner and students would read all, or part, of what they had written. Sometimes, writing was "published" in a class book, put on display or reproduced in the school newsletter. Occasionally, Mrs. P. typed all pieces of writing and distributed copies to the whole class to use in place of basal readers. Besides sharing work with classmates and the teacher, children also wrote for the school principal, other classes, and their parents.

Mrs. P. specified that she dealt with writing skills mainly in her small reading groups or in whole class situations. She professed to using models to follow with regards to sentence structure. Phonics were covered in specific lessons which related to writing. Mrs. P. also explained that she taught skills on an individual basis "when the child shows through his writing that he's ready."

Instructional Practices as Perceived by Mrs. P.

Two videotaped lessons provided the stimulus for Mrs. P. to identify and comment on particular instructional practices she employed in her teaching. The two lessons were taped on consecutive days and revolved around the writing of recipes for a Mother's Day cookbook. Table 1 presents a compendium of practices as identified by Mrs. P.

Mrs. P. identified a number of pre-writing practices. These included brainstorming, modelling and motivational techniques. The suggested intent was to build familiarity with words and an understanding of the writing task. Several repetitions of these practices were identified. Vocabulary extension was also mentioned as a frequent practice. Mrs. P. most often cited reinforcement and editing techniques as practices she engaged in during the writing time. Mrs. P. also acknowledged her practices of reinforcing class rules, clarifying meaning for students and helping students with preciseness of vocabulary.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by the Researcher

Two videotaped lessons were viewed in order to ascertain instructional practices Mrs. P. employed in her classroom. This viewing took place prior to teacher reaction in an effort to maintain neutrality and impartiality to identifiable practices. Table 2 presents a list of researcher-identified practices for Mrs. P.

In general, the researcher noted more specific practices than the teacher herself, who tended to identify more global strategies. Identifiable practices included building background, extending vocabulary through brainstorming and discussions, modelling writing (form and spelling), reinforcement and encouragement, and making provisions for oral work to precede written work. There was an emphasis, in these two lessons, on correction and editing actions on the part of Mrs. P. Attention to spelling was most frequently noted as an editing practice.

Values and Beliefs

Through the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure, a detailed view of Mrs. P.'s values and beliefs about writing emerged. Table 3 contains the actual valued quality as expressed by Mrs. P. The subordinate constructs suggest a valuing of extended, clear writing, expressed in an interesting but correct form. Many of the constructs imply the importance of writing as communication and therefore, the need for correctness, clarity and appeal.

Mrs. P. reduced her twelve subordinate constructs to nine superordinate constructs or belief statements. These center around the belief that developing positive, independent individuals is important to them being accepted, and fitting in with, others.

Relationship Between Beliefs and Practices

A comparison of Mrs. P.'s beliefs and practices illuminated an interesting correspondence. Two superordinate constructs dealt with the importance of children feeling at ease and experiencing success [P1 = Children should be content and pleased with themselves; P4 = A positive self-image is important for the good of society.]. These beliefs were manifested in several ways. The theme approach to learning allowed students to build up their knowledge base and develop some confidence about the topic for writing assignments. Teacher-structured writing experiences utilizing frames, models and patterns provided a non-threatening setting for writing and one where students could experience success without much risk. The considerable amount of oral practice that Mrs. P. gave her students allowed students to express themselves in the familiar oral mode before writing. Brainstorming for words and ideas was seen as a "crutch" for children "so they won't be afraid to write." Children were continually reinforced for their efforts. Praise took the form of verbal commendation ("Good for you, I like the way you"), teacher selection for on-the-spot sharing (Listen to _____'s example) followed by clapping to show appreciation, and general oral sharing with the class at the end of the writing time. Mrs. P.'s treatment of final products (displaying, publishing) could also be interpreted as contributing to her students' positive self-image.

Mrs. P. also believed in having children become independent writers (P2). Journal writing gave children the opportunity for self-selection of topic choice which, for the main part, was absent from her other writing activities. However, even in pattern writing, Mrs. P. allowed for individualism and accepted some deviation from the model. For example, in one segment of the videotape, Mrs. P. explained that she was "reinforcing that their ideas are okay and that even though we never talked about it before, that it's okay." Mrs. P. demonstrated that she wanted her students to take responsibility for their own writing. During the editing process, if she noticed numerous errors, she would send students back to their desks "and say, 'Think about this.' " As students read their work to her, she expected and found that most students could identify their own errors. She felt this was an important self-correcting development. When they needed assistance, Mrs. P. attempted to elicit from them what was wrong rather than tell them ("How can you make this say 'pineapple'? I'm not about to tell you ... go to your desk and think about it.") When mistakes were identified, Mrs. P. placed little red marks next to them as reminders but considered it the student's responsibility to change them in their writing. ("They'll have to go back and change it themselves.") The focus on self-reliance was evident in Mrs. P.'s spelling help; she helped students isolate sounds but expected them to translate them into letters.

Mrs. P.: Did you look under 's'?

Student: Yes.

Mrs. P.: What is the next letter for 'spaghetti'? Spa - ghet - ti. Sp.

Student: P.

Mrs. P.: s - p - aaaa ... spaaaa .

Student: A.

Mrs. P.: Guh

Student: G.

Mrs. P.: So you're looking for s-p-a-g.

At other times Mrs. P. said, "Sound it out. It rhymes with 'bake.' Does that help?" Perhaps due to their young age, Mrs. P. did not expect the children to be entirely self-reliant but in general her role appeared to be one of facilitator in helping children be aware of what to watch for in writing ("What did you forget here?") and to react as a reader might ("She needed an outsider to clarify that that's what she just said ... she wasn't specific enough so I tried to illustrate it for her.").

Mrs. P.'s concern for 'correctness' of writing is reflected in three superordinate constructs [P3 = Acceptance by society is necessary to become a member of society; P7 = Neatness/legibility is something valued by society; P8 = Proper grammar and usage is something valued by society.] Mrs. P.'s practices parallel these beliefs. Mrs. P. related that she used "models to follow with regards to sentence structure" and exposed students to grammatically and mechanically correct forms in her own writing for students. Correctness was reinforced in oral work as well ("I would appreciate it if you would answer me in a sentence.") Specific attention to mechanics was given during the editing process where again Mrs. P. encouraged children to make decisions on how to correct ("A orange? ... Yes, An orange."). Children were reminded several times of the difference between first and final draft and the reason for the editing process.

Several practices corresponded to Mrs. P.'s belief that everyone can teach, and learn from, others. All students were encouraged to share their experiences in the class discussion prior to writing and to share their writing upon completion. Brainstorming for words and ideas also suggested the communal learning belief. Modelling by the teacher and other students was a strong feature of Mrs. P.'s instructional pattern ("and again, a model, another child's writing, for the children to follow."). Children had the freedom to converse with other students during writing time and were encouraged to help one another ("and if you can't remember how to use them [dictionaries] ask me or somebody else to help you.").

Little concrete evidence of practices was found to substantiate two beliefs held by Mrs. P., [P5 = Living is an on-going learning process; P6 = An open mind alleviates prejudice and promotes human rights and freedom of speech.] but this may be due to their general or all-encompassing nature. Mrs. P. demonstrated in her own teaching style an open, accepting attitude to all contributions made by students and by employing an integrated approach to learning, helped her students to realize that learning takes place in all aspects of life.

In analyzing the beliefs-practice congruency, it can be noted that two clusters of beliefs set up a possible conflict in Mrs. P.'s practices. Mrs. P. believed that children should possess positive self-images [P1, P4] while also believing in society's acceptance of the 'correct' way [P3, P7, P8]. Mrs. P. demonstrated many practices to support both ideas; however, her practices guided by the need for correctness or properness may be interpreted as [illegible]icting with those to promote positive feelings. It is [illegible]t from Table 1 that Mrs. P. found these two beliefs [illegible]is for much of her teaching as she most often cited rei[illegible]cement and editing techniques as practices she enga[illegible] in during writing time. The researcher noted an emphasis on correction and editing work on the part of Mrs. P., indicating that her belief in correctness was a higher order belief than that dealing with positive feelings.

In as far as specific evidence of practices was found to support seven of Mrs. P.'s nine belief statements, it can be concluded that generally Mrs. P.'s practices and beliefs were congruent.

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P Lesson Number One

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-review of story -discussion about recipes	"trying very hard to bring the children to the same sort of ground-level, knowledge-wise."	"I'm a firm believer in that unless they have an experience with something or know something about something, they can't write about it."
-brainstorming for "ingredients" -writes suggested words on blackboard	-"brainstorming for ideas basically and drawing upon their experiencing" -(putting them on blackboard)" for later use during writing so they won't be afraid to write."	"I give them some words more or less as a crutch."
-discussion about "method" and "directions"	"I tried to relate it back to something they were familiar with because I wasn't getting much response with 'method' itself."	-"it (method) would have been a new word in their vocabulary whereas "directions" is something they are quite familiar with."
-brainstorms for "direction" words.	-"preparation for writing again."	-"so they would understand the format basically of the writing I would have expected."
-mention of Mother's Day cookbook	-"to give them a purpose."	
-writing recipe on overhead	-"modelling so that they would have some pattern to follow."	"I used a lot of frame sentencing but obviously you can't do a recipe in a frame sentence so it's just a model for a basic format."
-class reads through what has been written	-a review and a model basically	

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P . Lesson Number One

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-finishes recipe	-finalizing their ideas, pulling it all together, expanding their vocabulary with the idea that now they are done, what's another word for "done"?	
-talk about recipe choice, order in recipe	-a final preparation before beginning their own writing, just a review one more time	
-teacher writes words on blackboard	-It's okay for me to add to our class list of brainstorming words.	I really think that is important. That's another way to extend their vocabulary and their writing ability.
-mention of "first draft"	-Just to let them know again ... it's okay for them to make spelling mistakes as long as they get their ideas down.	They've done a first draft and second draft on other things ... so they know in their first draft they get their ideas down and then they come to me and we edit it together.
-helps with spelling	-just reviewing a concept that we have talked about but had not been formally taught	-During their writing, if I feel they are ready for something like that, I'll remind them of the "ck" rule ... There are some kids that I'm content if they just put the "c" there ... I base it on the individual child whether or not they are ready to utilize that rule in their writing.

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P Lesson Number One

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-wanders around interacting with students	-basically checking to see if they are on the right track — if they are following the so-called model unless they happened to have deviated from it.	-to see how their ideas are coming or if they have got any.
-interaction with one student	-reinforcing that their ideas are okay.	Even though we never talked about it before ... it's okay.
-comment to student	-positive reinforcement for her	-Hopefully the other children would hear me and double-check
-teacher reads example to class	-individualized reading reinforcement for ___ that she is on the right track — and again a model of another child's writing for the children to follow.	
-work with individual	-I asked him to read his writing to me — then once he did, I think I started out with something very positive about it, — and then we talked about something where he could have edited it or modified it.	We have a rule in my classroom that you can only write what you can read.

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P Lesson Number One

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-end of lesson remarks	-reassuring them that we would have more time later	They are very concerned about finishing a project so they needed that reassurance.

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P Lesson Number Two

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-passed out written recipe	-using the paper as an example of a model for writing but also getting the children to search for things - that they would have to include	
-reading recipe	-identifying key words, also getting hopefully a rhythm of how their language should go, a pattern, modeling, an example of a model that they could follow	
-conference with student	-what I do when they first come up is I glance over the page … I glanced over it and said it looked okay … Then I got her to read it to me … Sometimes I might have said, "Ther's something wrong with this word. You're going to have to check it out," and if there is something wrong I just put a little red line through it so they can remember which words they have to check out … I suggested that she go and check it out with the dictionary along the way too. I was just reminding her of places to put a period, or a place to put a capital letter … I'd say, "What did you forget to do there?" … so I'd just put a little line underneath to draw her attention to it.	-so that when she goes back to her desk she doesn't search and search

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P Lesson Number Two

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
	-Certain words I will (correct) for instance, bowl ... so I'll put it in the margin for them but I won't change it within their own text; they'll have to go back and change it themselves	-because it's too hard for them to spell without knowing the "ow rule
-conference with C	-At the beginning I made a comment to him, "C, I don't think you are ready to come up to me yet."	-The golden rule in this classroom is you can't come up to my desk for a final edit until you can read it to me.
-conference with girl	-I put an arrow and the reason I did it in that particular way because the rest of her paper was fine ... I fitted it in for her and then on her good copy it's up to her ... and I explained to her that you can just write it above	
-conference with student	-I was helping her to edit her recipe ... I was trying to elicit from her the Magic E rule.	
-teacher asks student to read writing	-Positive reinforcement for him and reinforcement for the other children if they listened and found that they were doing the same sort of thing.	-... and if they weren't doing that thing, hopefully they would have just one more example to follow.

TABLE 1

Teacher Identification of Practices Mrs. P Lesson Number Two

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-helps student with dictionary	-I use the McKracken book — the child is supposed to repeat the word so I tried to get her to do that and then isolate each sound. "What did you say first, what came after that?" so that she could relate the sounds to the order of the letters and then got her started with that within the dictionary	
-helps student find the right word	-Hoping she would come up with the answer — I was more or less eliminating the other possibilities.	
-conference with girl	-I guess I took what she wrote literally and tried to explain that to her — she wasn't specific enough so I tried to illustrate it for her.	-I think kids are the same as adults, they take a lot for granted — so she needed an outsider to clarify that that was what she just said.

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson One,

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-reviews book read	What happened in the story? Why didn't the soup turn out?
-builds vocabulary	Can you tell me anything about a recipe your mom uses?
-writes new words on blackboard	
-discusses meaning of new words.	
-brainstorms for "ingredients" and writes them on the blackboard	What else must we know about the ingredients?
-questions students about what comes next	There's a special word for putting all those ingredients together.
-writes "Method," asks students to sound it out and give a definition	What's a method?
-suggests another word - 'directions'	
-brainstorms for "direction" words and writes them on blackboard	
-explains assignment and supplies motivation re Mother's Day	Who can tell me what special day is coming up?
-suggests title for recipe	
-elicits ingredients, method, statements from students	What do we need to make "Cheese and Crackers?"
-writes on overhead and reads as she writes	

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson One

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-asks students to read what has been written	Please help me out.
-points to words as children read	
-helps students extend writing by suggesting the next word (Now)	
-asks for another word for "done"	
-asks students to reread recipe as she points to words	
-praises students	Super. Thank you.
-asks students to think about a favorite topic	Put the name at the top.
-reviews the order for writing the recipe	What do you do next?
-instructs students to choose either "method" or "directions"	I want you to choose one word, the one you can read.
-answers procedural questions	Any questions?
-explains about first draft and final copy	This is a first draft. We'll do a better copy before we type it out.
-adds "bake" to list	This is one word you may need.
-passes out paper	

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson One

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-responds to student query about the spelling of "chocolate"	CK in chocolate? "CH" is at the start and only "C" later on. "CK" usually only comes at the end of words.
-reminder about capital letter	Do you remember how names start?
-points out spelling of "birthday" on wall chart	
-reminder about spelling	We'll go through for spelling later.
-encourages students	Good for you.
-talks with a child to help choose a recipe topic	
-spelling of "cake"	Sound it out. It rhymes with bake. Does that help?
-reminder about spelling	Do your best. Sound it out.
-works with 2 students and has them talk about their recipe re ingredients and methods.	
-interrupts class to point out some are missing the ingredients section; discusses need for this with an illustration	
-discusses "chill" with student	
-listens to student read and helps clarify order	
-reminds students of time remaining	

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson One

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-positive reinforcement	Good. Keep telling me what we need.
	Super. Another good one.
	Good, _____. I like how you listed your ingredients.
-stops class to clarify meaning of "ingredients"	
-orally gives example of order of method	
-reads aloud a student's writing to emphasize the order	
-listens to child read and helps child extend	How long do you think we should cook it?
-helps student sound out word for spelling	SALT. SSS - ALL - T.
-corrects child; points to page	What does this say? (Met.)
	How can you make it say 'meat'? Yes, you could put a magic 'e' at the end, then we will understand it better. Sure.
	Method should be on another line and it should be a capital.
-asks students to leave papers on desk	After recess, we will probably have time to finish our recipes.

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson Two

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-review purpose	
-uses recipe chart to review parts and purposes	
-elicits words for each section and writes them on the board	
-encourages responses in sentences	The next person I ask, I would appreciate if you would answer me in a sentence.
-reinforces use of dictionaries	You may notice that I am not listing some of these and I have a reason for this. I want you to use the dictionaries to help you write them ... and if you can't remember how to use them ask me or somebody else to help you.
-distributes sample recipe	
-directs students to read and locate parts and words discussed	
-reads through with students, emphasizes the order of the parts	
-introduces and discusses degree symbol (°)	
-points out steps in method	
-directs children to check their recipes for these words	

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P. Lesson Two

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-asks students to continue with recipes from yesterday	
-invites children to come to see her when they are finished	
-listens to child read	
-circles spelling mistakes	That's on the blackboard. "Lettuce." You're going to have to look up ... You know how to spell "orange" ... it's the same way as you spell the color 'orange'
-gives paper for final copy	
-listens to child read and sends him back to his desk	You'd better get back to your desk and practice that before you come to see me. You know the rules.
-demonstrates how to edit by adding words above the line	Just up at the top print in 'first' where it goes.
-questions student about unreadable words - a red mark under them	What's this word? No, it's not ... take a look at that.
-writes word correctly in margin	
-rereads section aloud to child to show it doesn't make sense	"Then turn it on." How long to cook it?
	It doesn't sound very good.. You have to tell them ... What are you trying to do here? I don't understand.
-suggests a source of help	Take a look at the bran muffin recipe, it might help you.

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson Two

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-identifies spelling mistakes	This says pin-apple.
-attempts to elicit correction	How can you make it say 'pineapple'? ... I'm not going to tell you.
-Sends child to desk to think about it.	Go to your desk and think about it.
-directs class to listen to _____ read his recipe	
-praises child	Fantastic! Super job! Let's hope the rest of you can come up with something similar to that.
-asks class to review parts of _____'s recipe	
-indicates spelling errors	The only thing you have to check out is the spelling ... 'cream' all the way along.
-helps student locate a word in the dictionary by sounding it out	Did you look under 's'? What's the next letter for 'spaghetti'? Sp - a -ghet- ti. S-p-aaa,spaaa. Guh. So you're looking for 's-p-a-g' and I'm sure you will find it.
-praises child	I like the way you listed your ingredients so nice and clear. That's so nice to see.
-underlines spelling, suggests help	One word is on the board.
-writes correct word in margin	

TABLE 2

Researcher Identification of Practices: Mrs. P Lesson Two

Identification of Practices	Quotations of Teacher
-demonstrates what child has written to indicate it is unclear	So all you have to do is put a banana and a strawberry in the fridge, but you never told me that.
-suggests help for spelling	Check the board for banana and strawberry. I put them there just for you.
-praises child who has returned with correct answer	Did you figure it out? Good for you. Right, we have to put an 'e' to make it say, 'pineapple.'
-helps child decide on proper grammar	A orange? (Child says 'an'.) An orange.
-responds to recipe	That looks very good, _____.
-indicates spelling errors	You just have some spelling mistakes that I want you to check out in the dictionary, okay, and you can also check some of them on the blackboard.
-helps student locate a word in the dictionary	Did you look for the word, 'cream' under the letter, 'c'? Well, try that.

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 3

VALUES AND BELIEFS: MRS. P.

	Subordinating Constructs Values	Superordinate Constructs Belief Statement
1	main idea in each sentence is consistent	P1 = Children should be content and pleased with themselves
2	develops story line along consistent main idea	
3	self correcting	P2 = A child cannot rely on someone else being around; they must develop self-reliance
4	uses his own ideas	
5	uses capitals and periods	P3 = Acceptance by society is necessary to become a member of society
6	uses phonetic spelling (writing flow is not hindered by spelling)	P4 = A positive self-image is important for the good of society
7	quantity of writing, enthusiasm	
8	varying sentence beginnings	P5 = Living is an ongoing learning process
9	use of contrast	P6 = An open mind alleviates prejudice and promotes human rights and freedom of speech
10	legibility	P7 = Neatness/legibility is something valued by society
11	proper grammar and usage	P8 = Proper grammar and usage is something valued by society
12	able to follow a pattern or model	P9 = Everyone can teach others, and they can also learn from others

Teacher Profile Number Two: Mrs. L.

Classroom Description and Observations

Mrs. L.'s grade one classroom was situated at one end of an open area room which housed another grade one class as well. The two instructional areas were separated by a learning center used by both groups. Desks were grouped near the front blackboard. Mrs. L. utilized the space between the desks and blackboard for group-sharing activities. Pocket charts, experience charts, records of brainstormed words and samples of writing pattern literally covered the walls of the classroom. Student work was displayed at the entrance to the classroom which was adjacent to the library.

Students were a heterogeneous group from a middle-class background. A staggered enrollment gave Mrs. L. a smaller group to work with in the morning than the afternoon. Students moved freely around the class and contributed to discussions unimpeded by strict rules or order. Students talked with neighbors as they wrote.

Not all students began writing as soon as the task was set but chose to talk or organize their work space first. Writing activities were offered at some centers and some students chose to write at home as well as at school.

Overview of the Writing Program

Responses to the questionnaire provided a comprehensive picture of Mrs. L.'s year-long writing program. Mrs. L. described her general approach to writing as a "whole language approach" in which children were "given opportunities to write at their own level." Mrs. L. explained that she chose themes around which she structured writing activities such as minimal cue messages, journals, patterns, sentence frames, paragraphs, and stories. Mrs. L. indicated that she was satisfied with this type of work because "it reaches several levels of expectations ... and enhances the integrated, thematic approach." She mentioned that she would like to extend her students' writing to include research reports and story structure but found that limited time in the day was a constraint. Mrs. L. specified that writing activities occupied two hours of class time daily: in the morning one-half hour was devoted to journals and minimal cue messages, and one hour to expressive or pattern writing while one-half hour in the afternoon was spent on factual or expressive writing.

Mrs. L. communicated her purposes for writing as 1) language expression following the building of ideas and oral work, 2) a means of using the words connected with the theme and 3) as a way for children to become aware of patterns. Mrs. L. summed up her philosophy by saying that "children learn to write by writing." She professed that her students were able to organize their thoughts, express themselves fluently using short sentences or phrases, complete frames and adapt their writing to a pattern; she aimed to extend students' writing to longer sentences and paragraphs which used descriptive words and proper punctuation. Mrs. L. regarded writing as a means to "contact each child on an individual basis" and help them develop their use of oral words on the theme. It provided the opportunity for students to use the oral language developed in class and to express their own thoughts. Mrs. L. felt writing let the children "feel comfortable with their own efforts and progress."

Mrs. L. related that she encouraged writing by having "books and words everywhere" as a stimulus. Before having the students begin writing, Mrs. L. explained that she typically explored the theme using filmstrips, books and discussions to help the children develop their oral language. She guided the class through brainstorming sessions to generate words associated with the theme. Later, dramatizations and numerous repetitions of patterns and frames, both individually and as a group might be used to build up the children's "familiarity with words" and help them "think through and organize their steps."

While students were writing, Mrs. L. stated that she circulated to "motivate, encourage and assist" students.

If a student experienced difficulty during writing, Mrs. L. explained that she might share the pattern orally with them again, review the pattern or words to use, or read aloud an example of another student's work. It was indicated that skills were developed during oral work or sharing time. Mainly this consisted of demonstrating rules or pointing out words that are similar. Mrs. L. explained that then they "write class books together to reinforce skills." She declared that the main approach to skill development is through "practicing or doing."

Mrs. L. indicated that usually writing was shared with the group or displayed for others to read. At other times, Mrs. L. facilitated the sharing of writing with other classes and the principal, or published books. Occasionally, writing was sent home.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by Mrs. L.

The two videotaped lessons were viewed by Mrs. L. and prompted her to identify practices she employed in her classroom as well as to expound on her views of writing instruction. The two lessons were videotaped a week apart due to scheduling difficulties and school programs. The first lesson lasted approximately one hour and was based on the patterning of a poem which the students wrote as individual books. The second lesson involved a daily-minimal cue message followed by students writing messages in their diaries. It ran for approximately twenty minutes. Table 4 documents the practices as identified by Mrs. L.

In the first lesson, Mrs. L. identified a number of prewriting activities which centered on familiarizing the students with the pattern. Considerable oral work was done, followed by reading practice of the vocabulary involved. She identified numerous instances of interactions with students about their writing.

Reinforcement of the pattern was most often cited as a practice she engaged in during the writing process. Mrs. L. also acknowledged her practices of writing spelling words on the blackboard, listening to stories and responding to them.

In the second lesson, Mrs. L. identified several motivational strategies for writing. The most frequently noted practice was that of encouraging students to extend their writing. Mrs. L. also mentioned practices of scribing for students, helping with spelling and responding to students' messages.

Practices as Perceived by the Researcher

The two videotaped lessons were viewed by the researcher in order to ascertain instructional practices that Mrs. L. employed in her writing program. This viewing took place prior to teacher reaction in an effort to maintain impartiality to identifiable practices. Table 5 presents a list of researcher-identified practices for Mrs. L.

For the most part, the researcher-identified practices paralleled those of Mrs. L. except that repeated instances of similar practices were noted whereas Mrs. L. generally spoke about each practice only once. Identifiable practices included modelling the pattern and spelling, prompting students as they work in the pattern orally and in writing, reading what students had written and responding to it. The most frequently noted practice was her individual interactions with students which generally followed the pattern of reading, or listening to the story, questioning or responding and encouraging the student to continue. Praise and reinforcement of the written work was a customary part of each interaction.

Values and Beliefs

The Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure illuminated Mrs. L. 's values and beliefs about writing (Table 6). The subordinate constructs indicated a valuing of extended, descriptive writing that incorporated organization of factual or imaginative ideas. Mrs. L. wanted the child to be present in the writing and wanted that child to be motivated and confident.

The thirteen subordinate constructs were reduced to seven belief statements or superordinate constructs. Mrs. L.'s beliefs revolved around two premises: one, society has expectations for individuals and those who met those expectations would be better able to cope in society; and two, individuals must understand themselves and others.

Relationship Between Beliefs and Practices

A comparison of Mrs. L.'s beliefs and practices revealed, in general, a positive correspondence although on the basis of identifiable practices, two beliefs (L1 and L4) appear to be the driving force behind Mrs. L.'s approach to writing. Two valued features (signs of motivation, extended vocabulary) led to the belief statement, "A person needs to live in the world, cope with it, set goals and be productive" [L1]. This belief was discernible in several practices. Mrs. L. provided a variety of writing situations (journals, messages, factual reports, stories, patterns) giving her students an opportunity to experience and respond in many different forms.

Once the writing process was underway, Mrs. L. demonstrated that the student was in control of his writing; instances were noted where children were free to deviate from the pattern. Mrs. L. commented, "It is your decision. You are the author." Mrs. L. provided opportunities for students to set goals and be productive. Materials were readily available and expectations clearly explained. Students were allowed considerable time to work on projects and praised for their efforts. Mrs. L. did much to motivate her students. Considerable time was spent developing a theme before writing began. Mrs. L. mentioned using filmstrips, books, field trips, dramatizations and discussions as means she used to "explore a theme." Mrs. L. herself demonstrated an enthusiasm and excitement about writing using facial expressions and inflection to accentuate it. Motivation to write was enhanced by Mrs. L.'s genuine praise and responses to students' writing; she showed that she cared about and was delighted with the work they did. Daily minimal cue messages often contained questions that students were invited to respond to in their journals. Displays, sharing of writing with peers and adults, publishing of "best sellers" and referring to students as "important authors" all could be viewed as ways she stimulated students to be eager about writing. In one segment, Mrs. L. explained that she accepted different levels of performance depending on a student's ability: "She is satisfied with that, so am I ... It's my role as a teacher to say, 'Yes you are a really good author!' ... my role again is to turn her on, not turn her off."

Extended vocabularies were valued by Mrs. L. Work in brainstorming for words and phrases comprised an extensive portion of pre-writing activities in the classroom. The walls were literally covered with lists charts, cards and displays of words connected with the current theme. Mrs. L. encouraged students to extend their writing by engaging them in conversations about their writing, and willingly wrote any new words on the blackboard that they wanted to include in their writing. Mrs. L. worked at extending vocabulary by introducing new words orally, and had students experiment with them orally in many different situations (in groups, partners, on their own, listening to others), then gradually phased the vocabulary into the realm of reading and finally invited the students to use the new words in their writing. She stated, "If they weren't familiar with the words they wouldn't want to write." She further reinforced their extended vocabularies by responding to their writing by "using the vocabulary and the language (they) used."

Five subordinate constructs led to the belief statement that "Happiness and peace of mind helps a person cope with everyday stress." [L4] In this area, Mrs. L. stated that she valued confidence in writing, extended, flowing writing, and the inclusion of facts or other demonstrations of knowledge. The use of a patterning approach to writing could be seen as one way in which Mrs.

L. infused confidence in her students; the pattern gave the writing it's initial structure, while brainstormed words made the choosing of endings non-threatening. Numerous repetitions of the pattern writing were done orally "to get the children familiar with them so that they are able to take that risk when they are writing." She identified an example in her lesson:

> I'm zeroing in on (the less able students) so that I can give (them) that little self-assurance to say, 'Well, when Mrs. L. is doing it, I noticed that that really long word is "grasshopper" so I'm going to use that word.'

Mrs. L. also instilled confidence in her young writers by referring to them as authors and letting them make decisions about their own writing, even when they deviated from the pattern ("You are the author of your own book").

Mrs. L. also nurtured confidence by insuring that oral development of vocabulary preceded any written work. She stated, "The first part of writing is developing the language ... so you tell a story first before you feel comfortable in writing."

Mrs. L. endeavored to keep the writing process flowing. She encouraged students to "spell ... as you think it should be." She admitted, "I do not correct their spelling ... my role is to get them to use their language, to be free, to let the language flow." Sometimes when students asked about a spelling, Mrs. L. would write the word quickly on the board so that they could continue as soon as possible. Students were encouraged to help each other with spelling. Mrs. L. also stimulated the flow of writing by constantly interacting with her students, saying what she liked about their stories, asking questions and suggesting that they tell her more.

Mrs. L. demonstrated that the writing of factual information and the extension of knowledge was important by setting side one-half hour of her daily writing program specifically for this type of writing. As this was not part of the videotaped lessons, actual examples are unavailable. However, the extension of knowledge was apparent in building the theme and Mrs. L. praised students for using reference books and factual information in their other daily writing. ("Grade Ones, _____ is writing facts about caterpillars."). She explained, "She had taken my message and was extending my message. Through the caterpillar, she was finding out about moths and butterflies."

Two superordinate or belief statements dealt with interactions with others [L3 = We are expected to interact with others in our society; L7 = Interaction with others helps bring insight into others and ourselves.] Interactions were seen as a key component to Mrs. L.'s writing program. Brainstorming for ideas, sharing of books, stories and patterns and working with partners all gave students an opportunity to interact with each other.

Mrs. L. demonstrated this belief wholeheartedly; during the entire writing time, Mrs. L. instigated discussions with individuals about their writing, their interests and their plans. Mrs. L. described this as "total interaction with all of the children all of the time." She believed that "one of the reasons every author writes is to share with someone" and this became an integral part of the writing lesson. Special time was set aside for authors to read their works to the class. Mrs. L. extended this time until after recess as she felt it was important.

One belief statement [L2] related to taking risks [Society expects individuals to extend themselves (take a risk) and not be doubtful]. Mrs. L. facilitated risk-taking by presenting many options for students in their writing. Words and phrases that fit into the pattern were available in numerous places around the room, and many suitable examples were demonstrated. When students were having difficulty choosing a word because of lower reading ability, Mrs. L. would "point to two of them and say, 'This one is "on the grass or over the hill". What might your choice be?' and then the risk-taking is lowered." When students were writing and thought of something new, Mrs. L. would put it on a card or on the board.

> Some of the children may have just used it in their writing at random and never asked particularly what it looked like. The children who had thought of something and had asked me are the ones who did not want to take a risk to write

> it on their own so then I just helped them along by writing it for them.

The valuing of smaller, neater printing led Mrs. L. to the belief statement that "It is important to put your best effort forward at all times" [L5]. In one videotaped segment, Mrs. L. made a general comment to the class: " I like the way _____ has remembered to print very small because this is a tiny book." There is no other evidence of practices to support, or contradict, this belief.

There is little concrete data to substantiate the last belief held by Mrs. L. [L6 = It is important to have purpose because it helps to develop our growth and understanding of ourselves and those around us]. The general nature of the statement finds support in the general philosophy of Mrs. L.'s writing program. She stated, "Every author writes for the purpose of reading or being read to." The practices of sharing were noted earlier.

In analyzing Mrs. L.'s beliefs-practices congruency, there appeared to be two belief statements that conflicted with each other. These dealt with the beliefs in encouraging risk-taking [L2] and reducing everyday stress through promoting peace of mind and happiness [L4]. However, on closer analysis, Mrs. L's practices related to these two beliefs appear to enhance each other rather than run contrary to each other. Whereas risk-taking might be perceived as a means of increasing stress, Mrs. L.

facilitated risk-taking by using patterns, familiarizing students with possible completion phrases before writing and demonstrating examples. In other words, she took some of the 'risk' out of risk-taking for her young students. In this way, she reduced the stress of risk-taking and guaranteed success which would lead to happiness and peace of mind.

In two of her seven belief statements, Mrs. L. expressed the importance of interactions with others as this helps bring insights into others and ourselves [L3, L7].

Several practices in Mrs. L.'s room were found to support these beliefs, although it was noted by the researcher that most frequently these interactions were initiated by Mrs. L. herself. Children responded to questions and took part in discussions or group brainstorming but did not tend to initiate group interaction. The onus for interaction appeared to be on the teacher and, as a result, ~~the~~ benefit of "the insight into ourselves and others" [L7] may have been with the teacher. It is possible that Mrs. L. perceived more interaction occurring in her class than observations showed.

In as far as five of Mrs. L.'s belief statements found specific support directly in her practices, and two were backed by general support, it can be concluded that Mrs.

L.'s beliefs were generally congruent with her practices.

TABLE 4

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
teacher modelling story	I was using the rabbit to motivate them to use the language because I wanted them to stand up and do exactly the same thing.	It was a language lesson to lead into their writing — the language is being fit into the pattern.
students repeating pattern	I was just clarifying if that's what the children wanted the process to be for them.	They put where they found their bug into the appropriate spots so it's taken one step further now, from a language and speaking area into a reading area.
prompting the pattern	I was feeding the pattern verbally so that she would know what my expectations were.	There were times I had to feed in three-quarters of the pattern before they got the idea.
noting conversation on the blackboard	I was writing down all the things that the bugs said.	Then when the children start to write, they will have that information in front of them as well.
repeating pattern	I'm focusing on all the different senses to help them use their language ... I kept reinforcing that (the pattern) all the time.	I was feeding them only what they could see (on the chart). The information I was feeding them, they were going to bring back to put in their books.
reading the pattern	I stopped it there and we went over the words again and over the pattern together ... I was pinpointing the words and making them aware of what they had been saying.	It's a reading process leading into writing again.
reading cards to a student	I would point out two of them and say, "This one is 'on the grass' or 'over the hill.' What might your choice be?"	Often it means they can't read the word ... at least the risk-taking is lowered.

TABLE 4

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
reading word cards	I'm focusing their attention ... and they're repeating after me.	That's reinforcement of the words they have used.
repeating pattern	Again, it's going over the words, time and time again to get the children familiar with them so that they are able to take that risk when they are writing.	If they weren't familiar with the words they wouldn't want to write.
comments about good authors, titles	I'm making these children feel that they are writers too.	It makes them feel important and it makes them feel that what they are doing is something special.
has a student point to words in the pattern	I took her by the hand and took her right up to the words ... then I took her finger and we went across them together ... again reaching each child at the level where they're at.	
general process	I am not watching their printing ... my objective is to see if they can use the words that we have used in the vocabulary experience.	
reading and pointing	I repeat it with them and point while I'm going through their book .... I'm reinforcing time and time again.	It indicates to them, if they are confused, where they are and what is expected of them now.
helping students	I circulate constantly, constantly putting my finger down and saying, "Where are you here, you're doing really well" ... so I am constantly feeding them information and getting information fed back from them, keeping them all on task.	

TABLE 4

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
authorship decisions	I didn't say it was wrong because it is not wrong — she is taking on making a decision about how to handle the writing of the problem.	_____'s problem was that her grasshopper word was so long that she chose to write it only once.
	I didn't stop _____ then although she did waste a lot of time making a new book.	If I had forced her to sit down and write her book, it just would not have had the same interest level.
reinforcement	I stood up and said, "You are the authors of your own book. Nobody is telling you how to do it."	
interaction with student who has finished	I was trying to encourage _____ to play a little game with (the cards).	Where would you find a bee, order them, categorize them, and so forth.
sharing stories	The children who were finished were going up to the front and taking turns (reading to others).	
writing words by request	I'm writing at the board — as soon as they told me something new in order for them to use it in their writing, they wanted me to put it up on a card or on the board.	
listening to stories	_____ is reading her book to me	They just feel so successful about finishing their writing.
responding to stories	I'm making them feel special ... I was also extending it (the story) further and hoping maybe the next time he writes, he might take it further himself.	My role is to make them feel special, important.
END OF TAPED SESSION		

TABLE 4

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
minimal cue message	I give the initial sound of the word, or the medial sound or the final sound and the children are using the skills they have developed to decipher the words in the message.	It develops the children's knowledge of a word, the structural analysis of a word as well as the phonetic analysis of a word.
	That's my way of motivating them to write in their own message books which follows the minimal cue message.	
"Best seller" day	I am trying to get them to write at home ... I said if you write me a book at home, bring it to school and we will publish it as a "best seller."	It's just really, on my part, a motivation ... As a class we wrote a book aobut a caterpillar in his coccoon and then I used that as their first best seller.
	This is vocabulary development here.	Sometimes their vocabulary is at the point when they really don't feel they can say anything.
	I'm trying to get them to understand that their writing is really important ... I'm giving them that motivation ... so again that's the reasoning for going through all that preamble.	There are little bits of games that you play with them trying to trick them into writing.
minimal cue message	I saw myself saying, "Maybe you'd like to write about this."	Maybe this will give you an idea ... give them some purpose in writing.
interaction with an individual	She was asking me if I was going to finish publishing her book so again that got her going.	

TABLE 4

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
talking to student about message book	She had written me a message the day before ... so I suggested that she write a paragraph ... and extend what she was telling me ... I was getting her language moving.	
moving around the classroom	At this point, I am just really interacting with children, constantly moving around saying to them, "I like what you say."	I very seldom say anything about it being wrong.
reading story, talking with student	In this particular incident, I am getting _____ to think further ... I said, "I like what you are doing. How can you take it further?"	I know she is capable of writing pages and pages yet she very often writes only a sentence.
extending writing	I said, "_____, tell me something about the bug. Now you told me you like bugs, and it's a big bug and tell me more about it."	She's using her vocabulary, her language and it's putting it into focus for her.
	I went back to _____ again to encourage her and see if she had written more.	
work with multiple-handicapped student	I interact with her in the same way and I respond to her message as well.	
extending writing	_____ had decided he was finished then I decided he wasn't, but I didn't tell him that. I just said, "What else can you tell me?"	
reads a student's message	_____ here is showing me her book.	

TABLE 4

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
use of factual information	I encourage the children sometimes during their writing time to find a book ... to get some information	I don't say you must think of it only in your head.
discussion leading to writing	I sat down with her and worte down what she told me and she and I read it together.	I think it is very difficult for her to write (down) the reasons and if I do it for her, there is nothing wrong with that.
interaction with a student regarding content	I am speaking quite firmly with ____. I was saying, "I don't want to see Michael Jackson on the moon again. I want to see something different."	Now whether that's the right way of interacting with him, I don't know, but I figured by May he could put something different.
sounding out a word for spelling	I move up to ____ and ____ ... between the two of them and myself, we come up with this (spelling).	I don't mind them helping each other.
students reading to teacher	I've already been to them once, they already know I've been there once, but I still think it is important to be there for them to read their books.	I've made a point to be around to each one so I know what they have written so it's not a requirement (for them to read to the teacher).
responding to stories	Just encouragement again, using their language. I was always asking them a question about what they had written to force them to respond back to me again using words so those words could be written down if they choose to when I left.	So that's all it is, the interaction to get the language flowing, consequently the writing flows.

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 5

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-models pattern by selecting word cards and repeating the pattern	How do you say hello to a bee if you meet him in a beehive?
-asks for and chooses another student to fill in the pattern	Okay, _____, you come and tell your story.
-directs student to choose an "insect" card and a "place" card	
-informs class that she will write on the blackboard what each insect says	
-asks another student to fill in the pattern	
-prompts student to supply missing parts	And the cricket might say ...?
-writes "conversation" on the board	
-asks another student to read pattern, prompts when necessary	
-praises student	Boy, that was a good story!
-follows the same procedure with 3 students	
-reads some "place" cards for a student having difficulty picking one	
-asks class to recite pattern with student	Let's help _____ with this one.
-asks students if "conversations" are boring or have 'pizzaz.' Directs them to look at end punctuation.	What do you see at the end of them to tell you have a bit of pizzaz?
-dismisses class for recess	

****

TABLE 5

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-settles class	
-asks one more student to tell a story; directs class to look at words and pattern, how the story begins, how many times a phrase is repeated	I want you to watch carefully because you are going to be using those words in your "Hello" book.
-repeats above directions as another student tells her story	
-asks students to read other "bug" and "place" cards not chosen from the chart; reads and points to cards	Can you read after me?
-directs children to begin their written stories	Now it is your turn.
-asks one student to share her beginning	
-uses that example while pointing to and reading the pattern	
-prompts students to begin writing	All my 'good' authors have already started writing.
-circulates to answer questions and praise those who have started	H-E-L-L-O. _____ has already started his story.
-brings student to the chart stand to count the number of lines that are repeated	Three. Yes. Can you try it?
-comments on printing	I like the way _____ has remembered to print very small because this is a tiny book.
-reads a student's story beginning out loud while pointing to the words written	
-directs a student to make her own decision about how to write her book when the child questioned the teacher about a problem	It is your decision. You are the author, it is your book.

TABLE 5

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-draws attention to the use of exclamation marks	I see someone has used a 'surprise mark' (exclamation mark) at the end of theirs.
-encourages students who have finished to share with another person	If you are finished, quietly take it to the front to share with a friend.
-continues to circulate and interact with students	
-writes new endings that individuals suggest on the blackboard	
-listens to a student read her book	
-encourages students who are writing to continue while others share at the front	Those that would like to share come quietly to the front ... those that are still working you have two minutes to finish.
-asks a student to read his book and reminds students about behavior expected	It is your responsibility to be a good listener while _____ is telling the story.
-responds to stories	_____, I think you are an excellent author. Let's give him a big clap. You used the whole book ... some authors like to spread out their work. Did you notice that _____ had illustrations? _____ didn't use a bug. He used something else you met in the spring. Do you that is okay? I do.
-responds to writing by singing a song	What song might the bird sing to you?
-shows unusual printing to the class	
-gives directions for further sharing	Grade ones, we will share the rest of the stories when we come back.

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 5

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-reads, and writes in missing words from the minimal cue message as students supply them	Where does the beaver build his house? Where does the caterpillar build its home?
-discusses possible answers to the minimal cue message	
-introduces 'best seller' written by students and reads it to the class	
-reminds students that they may want to write about the message	
-encourages students to settle down	____ already has the date written down.
-reads and discusses a message she wrote back to a student	
-circulates around to students to see how they have settled in	
-helps a student sound out a word	
-responds to a girl who asks if she can write information on caterpillars	Yes, that will be factual information.
-announces to class that someone is writing factual information	Grade one, ____ is writing facts about caterpillars.
-questions student about her writing, then scribes for her	
-helps two students working togther to sound out a word for spelling	Oh! Oh! (Two o's Mrs. L.?) Yes.
-encourages a student to extend her writing	What else can you tell me?

TABLE 5

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. L. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-reminds students of time remaining, and praises work done	Grade one's, you have one more minute to put down what you want. It is very interesting going around reading your messages.
-reads message written on T-V monitor by a multiple-handicapped student	Shall we read it together?
-directs students to put materials away.	Grade ones, time is up.
-looks at writing as students bring it up to her	
END OF TAPED SESSION	

TABLE 6 MRS. L

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
1. signs of motivation 6. extended vocabulary	L1 = A person needs to live in the world, cope with it, set goals and be productive.
2. imagination in writing	L2 = Society expects individuals to extend themselves (take a risk) and not be doubtful.
3. illustrations match the sentences	L3 = We are expected to interact with others in our society.
4. showing confidence in writing 5. invented spelling (so language will flow) 9. writing in paragraphs 10. factual information 12. extension of knowledge	L4 = Happiness and peace of mind help a person cope with everyday stress.
7. smaller, neater printing	L5 = It is important to put your best effort forward at all times.
8. table of contents	L6 = It is important to have purpose because it helps to develop our growth and understanding of ourselves and those around us.
11. showing expression or feelings in writing 13. using descriptive words	L7 = Interaction with others helps bring insight into others and ourselves.

Teacher Profile Number 3: Mrs. J.

Classroom Observations

Mrs. J. taught a small group of students in Grade Three and Four. Students sat at large tables in one area of the room or met on a carpeted space at the side. Several small work areas (tables and chairs) were located around the room. Art work and writing projects were displayed around the room and in the hallways. Student-authored books were available in a reading corner while reference books on the current theme were displayed on another table. Numerous experience charts, recordings of brainstorming sessions and group poetry were evident.

This heterogeneous group of students came from a middle to lower middle class neighbourhood as reported by Mrs. J. They were familiar with routines in the classroom, amicable and eager to take part in classroom activities. During the writing time, students talked, shared and discussed their writing with others around them.

Overview of the Writing Program

Mrs. J. utilized the questionnaire to give a detailed account of her writing program. She described writing as an "integrated part" of her classroom. Her program was based on teacher-selected themes or her students's experiences and interests. Mrs. J. specified that students were involved in a great variety of writing: diaries/journals, reports, fictional stories, invitations, letters, poetry, patterning, riddles and descriptions. These could be either self-selected or teacher-initiated writing projects. Mrs. J. stated that she was satisfied with the writing being done in her classroom as it was "open-ended," allowing for differences in style, skill and interest. Also she felt it was meaningful and pleasurable; "the children enjoy writing and are eager to participate in the activities." Furthermore Mrs. J. indicated that she was pleased with her program because it enabled her to integrate writing into all subject areas.

Mrs. J. listed twelve purposes for writing in her classroom. These focused on development of skill and confidence in writing and its related facets. Mrs. J. mentioned that she wanted her students to develop fluency, creativity and personal styles of writing, and learn that writing is a means of communicating ideas, feelings, opinions and information. As well, she wanted to help students develop an interest in writing itself, an awareness of and an appreciation for different kinds of writing and an understanding of the purposes for writing. She aimed to develop the mechanics of writing along with organizational skills, thinking processes and evaluation/editing skills. She reported that her students wrote fluently and expressed themselves well while writing for a variety of purposes. She felt they put a good effort into their work and shared it with pride. Mrs. J. aimed to have students continue to expand and develop their writing skills, their imagination and creativity and their enjoyment of the task.

Mrs. J. stated that she used children's writing as a means of monitoring the individual's growth towards her goals in the writing program. It also provided another way to "understand them better." She felt writing enabled students to "work with our language, express themselves .... and work through problems and feelings." Furthermore, she indicated that writing provided an opportunity for students to learn from others through sharing."

Mrs. J. reported that she facilitated writing by physically arranging her classroom so it would be conducive to writing. This included the placement of students at tables "to encourage sharing of ideas" while still providing secluded corners for private writing. The rug area was used extensively for discussions, brainstorming, sharing and listening to stories.

Before having the class engage in writing tasks, Mrs. J. indicated that she planned the theme by "integrating the subject areas and skills and organizing and sequencing the activities." Students were prepared for writing by having them actively participate in experiences involving the senses. Then, typically, students were allowed to develop their ideas orally before they were required to express themselves in writing.

Mrs. J. acknowledged that while students were writing she "floated around to help focus ideas, ask questions, discuss ideas or any problems" but also asserted that students need time on their own. She stated, "I do find that most students, when they are absorbed in their writing, prefer time to themselves." However, when students were experiencing difficulties with their writing, Mrs. J. explained that she would assume the role of facilitator and guide and have the students try to identify the problem and suggest solutions themselves. Mrs. J. taught skills as they became necessary, "working with children individually from the point at which they are." She specified that she commented on their work in terms of skills and discussed areas that needed improvement. She did "spot teaching with the child on the specific skill" when she noticed he was ready for it. Children were encouraged to work with a partner.

Mrs. J. reported that most writing was shared in some way, within a large or small group, with a friend, or in a display. Sometimes the writing was shared only with the teacher and occasionally the child's writing was totally private, "only for them to enjoy." Writing occurred every day for varying lengths of time. Mrs. J. indicated that she encouraged writing at home.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by Mrs. J..

Mrs. J. utilized the two videotaped lessons to identify and comment on particular instructional practices she employed in her teaching. The two lessons, occurring on consecutive days, centered on the writing of 'tall tales'. Table 7 contains a list of practices as identified by Mrs. J.

Initially Mrs. J. used the incidents recorded on the videotape as stimuli to discuss her global teaching strategies and their rationale. The researcher attempted to have her focus on specific practices but often these were not identified directly but were discussed in an indirect manner.

Mrs. J. identified numerous pre-writing practices such as reviewing background material, brainstorming, oral practice of story structure and manipulative "hands-on" experiences. Mrs. J.'s comments suggested her desire to make her students comfortable with their ideas and with her expectations for the task.

During the writing time, Mrs. J. revealed how her practices allowed the students to remain in control of their writing with minimal intervention on her part. During editing time, the practice Mrs. J. identified most frequently was one of focusing the student's attention on spelling errors.

Instructional Practices As Perceived By The Researcher

Two videotaped lessons provided data on the practices Mrs. J. employed in her language arts program. The researcher viewed the videotapes prior to teacher reaction in an effort to maintain impartiality and neutrality to identifiable practices. Table 8 presents a tabulation of researcher-identified practices for Mrs. J.

In general, the researcher-noted practices matched those identified by Mrs. J., although as noted previously, Mrs. J. did not discuss specific practices as much as global strategies. Practices perceived by the researcher included presenting an agenda, reviewing background, brainstorming and recording of words and ideas, setting definite expectations for tasks, listening and responding on an individual basis and editing for spelling. There was an emphasis in these two lessons on oral discussion and manipulative experiences preceding written work. Correction of spelling was noted as the most common editing practice.

Values and Beliefs

The Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure presented an insight into Mrs. J.'s values and beliefs about writing. Table 9 provides a record of the actual valued qualities in writing which Mrs. J. mentioned along with their corresponding belief statements. The subordinate constructs suggest a valuing of effective, individualistic communication that can be appreciated by oneself, and by others. Mrs. J. valued evidence that writing was meaningful and enjoyable to the child, and that the child was striving to make writing meaningful to others.

Mrs. J. reduced her twenty-four subordinate constructs to seventeen superordinate constructs or belief statements. These revolve around the desirability of individuals that strive to be independent, self-motivated, healthy and positive in their outlook. Further, effective communication is necessary for individuals to feel fulfilled, to learn from others, and to feel part of, and function within, society. Exposure to different types of writing helps individuals understand others and make better decisions.

Relationship Between Beliefs and Practices

A comparison of Mrs. J.'s beliefs and practices revealed a harmonious congruence. Four superordinate constructs dealt with the concept of positive attitudes and emotional well-being [J3 = People should believe that everyone has worth and importance, and therefore something to communicate; J4 = Positive attitudes will affect the lives and people around us in a positive way; J8 = Self-motivation is a key to emotional well-being; J11 = Healthy feelings and healthy minds make for a healthy person]. Mrs. J. demonstrated these beliefs instinctively in her interactions with her students. All efforts made by students were received with warmth and acknowledged sincerely. Exemplary of such practices is Mrs. J.'s description of the group poem-writing session: "Some people would give suggestions and we would put it down and it didn't matter if your suggestion was terrific, we put it down." Interactions showed a mutual respect between students and teacher. In this regard, Mrs. J. provided a good role model for her young authors. After listening to a student read his story, Mrs. J. would "make specific comments about the things in it." She related that she did not believe in making just general comments which could sound shallow. "I think you can always find something specific to say, I like the way this character did such and such." Mrs. J. demonstrated her belief in the individual's worth in communicating. One role she took during the circle story was "to accept what children have said ... I guess just what you do in writing." Mrs. J. enhanced the individual's feeling of worth in several other ways. Sharing of written work, through reading or displays, can be seen as a promotion of a positive self-concept.

She used children's writing as examples and often called everyone's attention to "a very good descriptive phrase or putting two sentences together to make a longer sentence ... often I find that the children will pay more attention to what _____ has done or written than what I say." Mrs. J. demonstrated respect for other's writing by using samples from former students or from students in other classes. This was also aimed at alleviating doubt and reluctance in her young writers. Mrs. J. related, "I bring in those poems to share with the kids so they see that as a child they don't have to try to write as a grown-up would." Mrs. J. believed strongly in the individual and demonstrated this in her acceptance of different writing styles, work habits and rates of learning. She adjusted her expectations to accommodate individuals. ("There is no point in me spending five minutes talking to _____ why 'through' is spelled T - H - R - O - U - G - H when she has trouble with 'plan' and 'from' so I'll focus on something she is ready to handle"). While accepting individual differences, Mrs. J. expected an honest effort and responsibility from all. Self-motivation was valued and Mrs. J. arranged for this quality to be exercised. One purpose in reviewing the agenda at the beginning of the class was "so that they would understand that part of it we are going to do together and the part they were going to be responsible for." Similarly, Mrs. J. provided several times during the day for students to finish their projects. "That's when I feel it is their responsibility to say, 'Hey, I haven't finished my story. I'll get it out and that's what I'll do!' " Humour, initiated by teacher and students, was a natural accompaniment to Mrs. J.'s lessons. Comments such as "she writes beautiful stories and has lots of fun" and "We giggled a lot during the stories" exemplify Mrs. J.'s desire to promote a feeling of well-being in her classroom.

Five superordinate constructs dealt with the idea that effective communication is necessary to functioning in a social environment [J1 = Everyone is part of the world, not isolated, and coping is part of surviving in the world; J5 = We understand we are not alone in our feelings; J9 = Writing is a useful skill and through this writing becomes a part of people; J10 = Effective communication is a necessity at times to function in our society; J13 = Effective communication is helpful in attaining your goals.]. The surface constructs for these beliefs dealt with, in part, students seeing a need, or purpose for writing. Mrs. J. attempted to cultivate these qualities by presenting a daily agenda, and discussing it thoroughly so that students would understand "why they are going to be doing what they are going to be doing ... they've got to have a purpose." Mrs. J. also related that skills were developed in conjunction with real situations. For example, during a unit on the telephone, Mrs. J. realized the opportunity to introduce quotation marks because "there was a need for it." Mrs. J.'s scheme for editing also helped to augment the child's notion of a need for writing. Not every piece of writing was fully edited. Mrs. J. felt that "if you do that all the time with children, then it becomes too long a process and their work ends up being very short." However, when writing was to be displayed, as with the poetry, "they know that there is a reason for it to be letter perfect ... then it's fine." Mrs. J. valued students making writing personal and effective. She fostered this quality by choosing themes from her students' own interests. She found that lack of interest in topics "really hindered their writing." To further enhance writing, Mrs. J. worked on building the background to a theme before she expected students to write about it. She moved from the general, concrete ideas to the more abstract as witnessed in her sculpture - to - poetry writing lesson. She stated, "If they don't have a basis or some vicarious experience or some real experience or some hands-on kind of experience, I find that their writing is very superficial." Mrs. J. also provided those experiences through stories, role-playing, filmstrips, and discussions. This gave the students the needed information "to play with the ideas ... to process the information," before they were required to express themselves in writing.

For communication to be effective Mrs. J. valued the development of the skills and mechanics of writing. Mrs. J. appeared particularly concerned with spelling and made many provisions to help her students in this area. During brainstorming sessions, words were written on the blackboard then "they are there for them to use and I don't have to worry about spelling them." Mrs. J. numbered words on spelling charts and the blackboard "so it is very easy to identify a word." Then even if children were not able to read all the words, they could ask, for example, "which one is 'terrific', and all I have to say is 'Number Two'." Mrs. J. also had students make a spelling helper book with a page for each letter of the alphabet, and, at the back, lists of categorized words. She explained that "when they want a word spelled, they bring me their book open to the page, we talk about the word, then put it in."

Mrs. J. worked with the mechanics of writing with individuals as she saw they were needed rather than teaching specific lessons to the whole group. Editing sessions were utilized for "little 15-20 second mini-lessons" in areas of need. After one such session with a boy, Mrs. J. justified her approach by stating "he probably will remember that better because he is using it and he needed it than if I had done a half-hour lesson on contractions."

Mrs. J. valued evidence that her students were learning through writing. Experiences such as the group poem writing appeared to offer unique opportunities. Mrs. J. led the class through a discussion of each suggestion and clapped out the rhythm:

> The kids would say, "The idea is good but it doesn't seem to fit", "It's too short," "It's too long","It doesn't have enough in it" or whatever and then we'd revise it. So a lot of the revisions came from them. They themselves heard it and they discovered something that wasn't quite right."

Later, when students were writing their own poems, Mrs. J. took the opportunity to praise a student for self-correcting her own rhythm pattern ("That is just what happened yesterday when we were doing our correcting.")

Mrs. J.'s belief in developing independence and sharing of individual abilities is reflected in three superordinate constructs [J6 = People are individuals and the individual is special. We can learn in different ways from different people; J7 = One of the goals of life is to become the best person you can be; J14 = You must learn to be independent because you never know when you will have to do it on your own.] Mrs. J.'s practices, to a certain extent, reflected these beliefs. While fostering independence on the part of students, Mrs. J. took care to structure lessons and activities to ensure confidence in risk-taking. In this way, students were not forced to be independent but were first guided, then encouraged to do things on their own. Typically, Mrs. J. had the group discuss and share ideas before students worked on their own. As an example, Mrs. J. had the children take part in the circle story before they worked on their own story. She stated, "If you go through this together then it lowers the chances of anybody not being clear or sure of the kind of writing that they are going to be doing." Students were given the opportunity to choose their own topics during part of the writing time. Mrs. J. further encouraged independence in editing by requesting students to proofread their own writing first before seeking her aid. When students came for help, Mrs. J. usually asked what they had already done to solve the problem, rather than simply supplying a solution. Mrs. J. typically took the time to go through possible avenues of help with the child so as to build their repertoire of resources for the future.

Mrs. J. also advocated learning from individuals. To this end, class discussions, sharing of writing and brainstorming for ideas figured strongly in Mrs. J.'s program. Mrs. J. felt it was important for children "to listen to the ideas of others as often this sparked their own creativity." The circle story exercise let students "experience other people participating in a story." The physical arrangements of the classroom reflected Mrs. J.'s desire for students to get ideas from each other and to learn from one another. Often Mrs. J. facilitated the recognition of an individual's ideas by stopping the class to acknowledge a new, different, or excellent idea and encourage students to stop by to ask the individual about his idea. Sharing with others was seen to invite creativity.

> If they come to a problem in their story, I want them to talk to other people about it, I want them to talk to me about it, go through it and sort it out rather than put down the easy way out, because that's when you come up with the creative imaginative solutions to the problems.

Mrs. J. valued evidence of thought, organization or sequence in students' writing as she believed everyday life is organized and has some sequence (J2). Mrs. J. demonstrated this belief in the structure of her lessons. Daily agendas illustrated the organization of activities. While reviewing stories of Pecos Bill, she did them in chronological sequence. Mrs. J. admitted that "if you sequence what you are going to talk about in a way that makes sense, it helps children to remember and then to sequence their own memories." Activities such as the circle story helped students focus on and think about a beginning, middle and end to the story.

Mrs. J.'s belief in the need for organization and thought in writing was manifested in several ways. At times the thinking through process was accomplished in a group setting through discussions and brainstorming. At other times, Mrs. J. would acquaint her students with a project several days beforehand "so they have a chance to think about it." When students were left on their own to write, Mrs. J. allowed for "a period of ten, fifteen minutes of that thinking-through," a time for the planning which she felt was the most important part. "All the important things, the processes are going on in the mind ... the other is just the product."

Mrs. J. promoted her belief in exposing children to different types of writing and resources [J5] in several ways. Various forms of language such as poems, songs, stories, and factual information was incorporated in other themes and shared orally with the class or at the listening centre. A display of books on the current theme was available for the students to read, as were several types of dictionaries.

Mrs. J. explained that the more "forms of literature they are exposed to the more they realize there is to write about and the ways there is to write about it." Indirectly these practices also promoted Mrs. J.'s belief in the beauty of our language [J12].

Mrs. J. believed that "you learn by experimenting and taking risks" [J17]. As illustrated earlier with the constructs dealing with developing independence, Mrs. J. structured her activities in a way to make risk-taking non-threatening so that children would be encouraged, rather than forced, to try things on their own.

New ideas or methods were received supportively. The researcher never observed Mrs. J. 'putting down' an idea or suggestion. Mrs. J. tactfully offered suggestions to problems but encouraged children to reach their own solutions. One example occurred during the sculpture session: "I never said, 'Don't do that. It's not going to work but I gave her suggestions .... 'You just decide what you want to do.' " In the same way, Mrs. J. often asked students to make suggestions for correcting errors or improving passages during the editing process.

The final superordinate construct [J16 = Well informed individuals are better decision makers; better decision makers could improve our world.] is very general in its nature, and support for it can be seen in the general nature of Mrs. J.'s program. Themes covered a wide range of interests and concerns. Mrs. J.'s emphasis on oral discussions appeared to provide an excellent means of sharing of knowledge, from student to student, and from teacher to student.

In analyzing Mrs. J.'s beliefs and practices congruency, it became evident that two belief themes lay in direct opposition to each other. Several belief statements dealt with the importance of the individual developing abilities and becoming independent [J6, J7, J14]. Practices were found to support these beliefs. Several other belief statements [J1, J5, J9, J10, J13] revolved around the social aspect of life and the importance of communicating with others and being a part of society. Numerous practices were found to substantiate these beliefs. It would appear that while Mrs. J. promoted individualism and self-reliance, she also was encouraging group work and the social aspects of written communication. This could possibly have set up a conflict in her students' perceptions of her expectations. Analysis of practices suggest that Mrs. J.'s beliefs in societal acceptance, and coping in a social setting was of a higher order than her beliefs in individual independence as witnessed by the higher percentage of practices noted in that area.

In as far as sixteen of Mrs. J.'s belief statements were supported by specific practices and the final belief statement was supported generally by classroom practices, it can be concluded that Mrs. J.'s practices and beliefs are congruent.

TABLE NUMBER 7

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. J. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-agenda for the morning	"I write down an agenda and we go through it so the kids have a feel for where they are going."	"They've got to have a purpose ... they have a chance to think about it as we are going through the activities."
-review characteristics of tall tales	"I wanted the children to review the elements of the tall tale so that they could have them clear in their minds when we're doing our brainstorming and talking about it."	
-students review titles and events of stories read	(not identified specifically)	"These stories are in sequence ... I find that if you sequence what you are going to talk about ... it helps children to remember and then sequence their own memories."
-records ideas on board	"I put the word on the board, key words next to things."	"It helps children focus on key concepts ... and if they need these words for spelling, they've got them."
-brainstorming for story ideas	"Here we are going from the known ... we've had a chance to experience it ... we will lead into what he could have done."	"... to brainstorm for ideas gives children an opportunity to listen to the ideas of others ... I want the kids to write together ... two heads are better than one. I think it is important to let the children know that they can use another idea, somebody else's idea or an idea in a book, and they can change it even in the smallest little way, to put their own mark on it so then it becomes theirs."

TABLE NUMBER 7

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. J. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-circle story	"This is just before we got started on our circle story — we're going to go through the story and see how it starts, and builds up and then comes to a logical conclusion — I keep trying to say to them to keep the character in character."	"I wanted to make that point and if you go through this together then it lowers the chances of anybody not being clear or sure of the kinds of writing they are going to be doing."
-teacher participates in story circle	"I'm usually the story starter."	"The role is to initiate it, to set the boundaries and the limits — and to accept what children have said and give guidance to somebody who needs it."
-setting the task	"I wanted, just as a kind of final summary, to remind them about the whole purpose which was the exaggeration, the humour and keeping your character."	
-teacher moving around	"Discussing with the children their selection, if they are having difficulty, then I'll work through it with them, that they have sorted out if they are going to work by themselves or with a friend."	"... that's why I like to be with the kids right at the beginning and then kind of hide myself away for awhile and then come back just to help them focus in."
-problem with two boys	"I asked them to talk about it."	
-writing in spelling helper book	"I first wrote down 'was not' — so a 15-20 second little mini-lesson on contractions."	"He probably will remember that better because he is using it and he needed it."

TABLE NUMBER 7

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. J. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-observing writing of ESL student	"Just peeking ... if they need me I'm close by and if they don't need me, I'm just floating, not staring and not peering over their shoulder. I'm not counting the words they've done and comparing it with other kids."	
-teacher sitting away from students	"See now after they came back from recess I was hardly visible ... and if they have a problem then they come and see me. So I'm with them initially at the beginning, give them their space and then we get together at the end."	"I find that if I go around them too often I bug them ... I'm a distraction."

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE NUMBER 7

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. J. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-agenda	"...putting the agenda on the board giving them a focus for what we are going to do."	
-brainstorming	"The children are brainstorming for words ... I usually number them."	"... it usually is easy to identify them ... she'll come to me and say 'Which one is "terrific"?' and all I have to say is 'Number Two'. Then the child is doing it on their own but they are receiving the help they need."
-explanation of art project	"The children had already been told the day before that they were going to do a sculpture and a poem to give them the opportunity to think about it. I think if I hadn't told them, the explanation and idea sharing would have been longer."	"I very seldom make one in advance to show the children. I prefer to talk to them about the method of doing it or possible methods .... and let's share other ideas."
-children working on sculptures	"I generally move from table to table at the beginning of something ... Here I am just discussing with every chid the idea that they have in their head."	"I find that if I go around ... and I can get them talking about what they are going to do, then it gets them going on it right away."
-example of student's work	"I held up something to show about an idea."	"Often I find that the children will pay more attention to what ______ has done or written than what I say."

TABLE NUMBER 7

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. J. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-discusses sculpture with child	"I must have talked to her five times ... gave her suggestions."	"She finally did take one of those suggestions but if I had said to her, 'That's not going to work. Do it this way,' she probably would have rolled her plasticine in a ball and put it away."
-assists student with a problem	"I asked her what she had done already (to solve the problem) ... I asked her what other sources could you go to in order to find words that begin with certain letters."	"Then at least she knows that if I'm busy and she can't find something she will have two or three sources at her fingertips."
-editing conference	"We edit together ... they read it to me ... and then if there are any things that we need to fix up for a final polished copy, then we talk about them and I usually, with a colored pen, put them in."	"If I ask them to erase it and put it in, it's just too time consuming ... then they can fix it up on their good copy."
-editing conference	"I'll focus in on something that she is ready to handle. On the others I'll just identify it: 'This is the way it is spelled.' She'll look at it, say it, and away we go."	"Some of the particular errors or omissions or something I spend a lot of time on. Some of them go right over depending on the level of the child."
-interaction with student	"I asked him where he was and what he was about to start and what he had just finished."	"He was spending a lot of time walking around you."

TABLE NUMBER 7

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. J. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-editing with a student	"There were three or four words that ended with 'ing' ... and in every case she had missed the 'n' ... so when we came to the fourth one I didn't even need to stop and she said 'I missed the "n" in that one too' and I said, 'You picked that one up. That might be something for you to remember when you are doing your writing.' "	
-misspelled word	"I asked her if she could find a letter in there that she's not hearing the sound for ... I asked her to say the word ... so I showed her how to spell it and told her how to pronounce it."	"That's the beauty, I think, of private instruction."

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-goes through the agenda and makes explanations	"Just to let you know what we are going to be talking about and working on this morning, I've put a mini-agenda up here."
-review elements of tall tales by asking students to recall	
-uses pocket chart and title cards to list some adventures read	
-asks students to recall events of stories, questions students to aid recall	"What happened next in his early childhood?"
-records key events and words on the blackboard	"What did the coyotes teach him to do that made him a super cowboy?" "That's exactly what he did."
-asks students to brainstorm for new story ideas	"Can you think of a new situation that Pecos Bill might be in?"
-lists new titles on board	
-reads a list of possible titles she has thought of	"I want you to think about the ones we discussed. Listen to these and then form one of your own."

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-suggests an idea for a circle story	"... and that's the one I thought we could practice making up a story in our circle story."
-reviews procedure for circle story	
-states title and begins story	"Pecos Bill Saves the Coyotes."
-listens to contributions by students	
-keeps students on track	"Remember the idea is that he will save the coyotes."
-responds to the whole story and comments on certain features	
-asks students to reorganize to do another circle story; initiates story again	
-asks students to create their own Pecos Bill adventure	"Now you will have a chance to do your own creative thinking."
-sets guidelines, requirements and time limit	"You can do this by yourself or with one friend."
-answers procedural questions	

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-visits each student briefly to answer questions, encourage or discuss ideas	"What's your topic? That's a great one. He could have lots of adventures along the way."
-writes a word in student's spelling helper book	"It's 'up', like down and up, and 'set' and it's all one word. It means 'unhappy'."
-helps students with spelling	"You put 'un', that's your prefix, how do you spell 'happy'? You spelled the whole thing yourself."
	"... wasn't. Was not. You put them together to make 'wasn't' so we put 'was' the same, we bring the 'n' and the 't'. The 'o' is missing so we put an apostrophe and get 'wasn't'."
-moves around room, observes writing	
-distributes snack	
-reviews procedures for continuing after recess	
-dismisses class	
END OF TAPED SESSION	

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-discusses agenda for the morning	
-leads class in reading a poem they wrote yesterday	
-elicits types of poems from class	
-makes notation of types of poems on blackboard; discusses features with class	
-introduces assignment	"So as we continue to talk this morning and while you are doing your sculpture, think about the type of poem that you would like to do and also what you would like to do about it."
-has class brainstorm for descriptive words to use in poems	"Can you explain that one a bit, James?"
-numbers and lists suggestions on board	"What does it mean if you are a 'daring' person?"
-extends vocabulary	
-sets expectations for sculpture time	"As you are working on your sculpture I would like you to be thinking of two things. Number One, the type of poem your would like to do and Number Two, what you would like to write about. Then as you are working on your sculpture, plan out the poem in your mind."

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-shows materials and leads a class discussion on how to use them for sculpture	"Can you think of one way you can use toothpicks?"
-sets expectations for poetry writing	"Your first writing ... will be a rough draft. Play with it just like we played with our rough draft on the chalkboard yesterday ... we erased, we changed words ... we even erased the whole thing because it wasn't working ... When you are finished, come to me and together we will edit it."
-asks students to review order of tasks	
-passes out materials	
-circulates around room, discussing and questioning students about sculpture	
-offers encouragement, praise	"Some of you may want to come round and see how ______ has done his cowboy hat."
-helps student locate a word in the dictionary	
-helps students set up sculpture display	
-reminds student to start on rough draft	

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J.   LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-listens and points to words and student reads poem	
-directs a student to word list for correct spelling	"Could you look at our Tricky Word list and find the word 'could'?"
-corrects spelling on paper	
-asks student to consider how to set up a crossword poem	"Think about it, then the file cards are over there. Otherwise, it is fine."
-writes "honeymoon" in child's spelling helper book when asked	
-suggests a solution for an art design problem	
-listens to poem as child reads	
-mentions editing done by student and reinforces	"I see you changed that. Why did you change it? — That's right, it didn't fit."
-identifies spelling mistakes	"Can you look at Number 18 on our Tricky Word list and tell me what's different between that and your 'besides'? This says 'how'. Look at our question words list and find where it says 'who'."

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-corrects spelling on paper	
-explains spelling of 'says'	"When we say 'says', it's really like this. (Writes) We should say 'says' (saz) but we say 'says' (sez)."
-helps student with numerous spelling errors	"Let's look at 'branding'. You have 'brand' and we want to have the suffix 'ing'. What is the suffix, 'ing'?" "Okay, 'pretty' sounds like it should be an 'i' but it is an 'e'." "'Suddenly', it is all one word. When something belongs to someone, their house, their car — (child answers). Yes, 'ei'. There's an extra letter in there. What is it? Say the word for me."
-pronounces a word properly for student	"That's right. You don't hear an 'l'."
-asks child what a word is and corrects spelling	
-pronounces misspelled word	"Listen to this word." (Child responds, "d")
-assists student with a title for the poem	"What is your poem about?"
-directs child's attention to main words	"Can you think of something to really make P-e-c-o-s B-i-l-l stand out?"

TABLE NUMBER 8

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. J. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-sounds out "incredible" as child supplies letters	"You have the beginning, in-cred. Now i - ble like table, b-l-e."
-praises student's solution to previous problem	"Now what do you notice now that you have traced it. I see the 'Pecos Bill' stand right out."
-listen to poem	
-corrects spelling	"What always comes after 'q'? This is one of the few words that end in 'c'."
END OF TAPED SESSION	

TABLE 9 MRS. J.

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
1. child seeing a purpose for writing 16. child seeing a need for writing	J1. Everyone is part of the world, not isolated, and coping is part of surviving in the world.
2. evidence of thought, organization or sequence	J2. Everyday life is organized and has some sequence.
3. fluency 22. respect other people's writing	J3. People should believe that everyone has worth and importance, and therefore something to communicate.
4. personal style	J4. Positive attitudes will affect the lives and people around us in a positive way.
5. put themselves into stories (feelings).	J5. We understand we are not alone in our feelings.
6. originality and creativity	J6. People are individuals and the individual is special. We can learn in different ways from different people.
7. evidence of enthusiasm about writing	J7. One of the goals of life is to become the best person you can be.
8. working at or above their level 14. honest effort (doing their best).	J8. Self motivation is a key to emotional well-being
9. writing for their own purposes; writing chosen for free-time activity 20. evidence that writing is useful	J9. Writing is a useful skill and through this, writing becomes a part of people.
10. development of skills and mechanics 17. play with, manipulate ideas	J10. Effective communication is a necessity at times to function in our society.

TABLE 9 MRS. J.

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
11. humour	J11. Healthy feelings and healthy minds make for a healthy person.
12. descriptions, comparisons	J12. Our language is beautiful.
13. good vocabulary and sentence structure	
15. learning through writing	J13. Effective communication is helpful in attaining your goals.
18. satisfaction from writing	J14. You must learn to be independent because you never know when you will have to do it on your own.
19. evidence of use of other resources (dictionary, people, reference books)	J15. It is important to expose children to different forms of writing in order to develop an awareness, an appreciation, and an interest in different written forms.
21. appreciate different kinds of writing and requirements for them	
23. sensitivity to the world around them	J16. Well informed individuals are better decision makers; better decision makers could improve our world.
24. taking risks - experimenting	J17. You learn by experimenting and taking risks.

Teacher Profile #4: Mrs. M.

Classroom Description and Observations

Mrs. M's grade one class was situated in a large rectangular area that was shared with another grade one class; a common learning center area separated the two teaching spaces. Desks, clustered in twos, were arranged in rows facing the blackboard. Pocket charts and lists of words from previous language work were evident on the walls. Student writing was displayed at the hallway entrance to the classroom.

Students were a heterogeneous group from a middle-to-lower middle class background as reported by Mrs. M. Students were well-behaved and appeared confident in the routines followed in daily activities. They took part in discussions without much prompting from Mrs. M. During the writing time, students chatted quietly with neighbours and moved around freely. Writing was an activity that students could engage in at learning centres as well as the whole group teacher-initiated writing activities.

Mrs. M: Overview of the Writing Program

The questionnaire provided Mrs. M with the opportunity to explain her writing program. She indicated that she developed her language arts program around themes.

Typically the kinds of writing students did were patterns and frames which centered around this theme. Mrs. M related that students also wrote in journals daily, to which she responded in writing, and created stories on their own topics. Mrs. M indicated that she was satisfied with the written work she assigned as she felt her students were confident doing it and were proud of their work. Mrs. M explained that she would like to include more individualized story writing in her program but lack of time restricted it. Lack of time was cited as a main concern in running an individual writing program.

Mrs. M saw the main purpose for writing in her classroom as one of "allowing children to express themselves in a mode other than oral." She asserted that most students were able to write complete thoughts on paper and therefore aimed to extend their story writing to three or four sentences. She also aimed towards having students develop some notion of 'sentence'. Mrs. M felt writing enabled her students to express themselves and therefore, enabled her to see their feelings on things, and find out about the experiences they had had.

Mrs. M described the physical arrangements she made for writing to occur in the classroom. Student desks allowed each child to have his own space but the clusters of two placed the child close to another "should he need help." Mrs. M affirmed that she encouraged children to share with others and help one another during writing time. Materials were made accessible at a writing centre. Mrs. M scheduled writing in the morning, usually before 10:30 a.m. She estimated that approximately 150 minutes per week were spent in writing but that she would like to double that time if she could.

Mrs. M's response to the questionnaire indicated that prior to writing, she made sure her students knew what was expected of them. She stated, "I usually have some students tell me what is expected, what they plan to work on." While students were writing, Mrs. M acknowledged that she would write herself for part of the time, and then go around helping children. If students were experiencing some difficulty during writing, Mrs. M explained that she would talk to them about writing and try "to get them to come to some conclusion (about) where they could go." Mrs. M related that she dealt with the development of writing skills in two ways. Mainly she worked with individual students on specific skill areas, but she also engaged in some group skill lessons. When a child was noted to be weak in some area, she dealt with it individually and made a notation of such in the child's file.

Mrs. M explained that usually students shared their completed writing with a friend or in small groups. Typically, writing was displayed in the class area or hallway. At times, Mrs. M had the writing typed and put into a class book. Occasionally, writing was simply discarded.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by Mrs. M

Two videotaped lessons were used to have Mrs. M identify and comment on instructional practices she employed in teaching writing. The lessons were videotaped a week apart due to scheduling difficulties. Both lessons dealt with encouraging writing through the use of sentence patterns and lasted approximately 45 minutes. Table 10 presents the practices as identified by Mrs. M.

Mrs. M identified a number of pre-writing activities which included oral practice with the frame sentence, modelling and motivational strategies. Mrs. M's intent was to review the pattern so students would know what was expected and to encourage them to extend their writing. Mrs. M most often cited editing and correcting practices which she engaged in during the writing time. Mrs. M also acknowledged her practices of self-correction, self-evaluation and instilling pride in ownership.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by the Researcher

The researcher viewed the two videotaped lessons in order to determine the instructional practices employed by

Mrs. M in teaching writing. This viewing took place prior to teacher viewing in an effort to maintain impartiality. Table 11 presents a list of researcher-identified practices for Mrs. M.

Identifiable practices included modeling (orally and written), oral practice with students, encouragement and praise, and individual interaction with students with an emphasis on editing and correcting actions. Attention to spelling and encouragement to extend writing were noted as the most frequent practice undertaken by Mrs. M during individual writing time. In general, the researcher recorded more specific instances of these practices than Mrs. M who identified her practices in a more global way.

Values and Beliefs

The Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure illuminated Mrs. M's values and beliefs about writing. Table 12 presents these as verbalized by Mrs. M. After viewing samples of her students' writing, she generated twelve subordinate constructs. These focused on the valuing of extended, innovative writing in a correct, structured format. Writing (and drawing) for the purpose of communication was emphasized.

The subordinate constructs were reduced to nine superordinate constructs or belief statements. To a large degree, these reflected the idea of writing as a means of communicating with others (M2 M3, M5, M8); this sharing aspect necessitates correctness (M7,M9). The other belief statements generally fell into the category of society's expectation that one strive to do one's best in order to change the status quo (M1,M6).

Relationship Between Beliefs and Practices

A comparison of Mrs. M's beliefs and practices was made. Four superordinate constructs dealt with the communicative nature of writing [M2 = Writing is an alternate method of communication; M3 = Writing is a two-way venture; M5 = Interesting writing will attract more readers; M8 = A person should get the maximum out of what they read (what is written)]. These beliefs were apparent in many of Mrs. M's practices. One of Mrs. M's aims for her writing program was to have children extend their writing. Although the children used sentence frames or patterns extensively, Mrs. M "tried to get through to them the fact that it was their own, that they were able to use the basic structure putting in their own ideas and own names." Mrs. M's reactions to written work often took the form of questions that invited the students to add to their writing ["Where are they swimming?"]. She related, "I try to push them but I try to get them to still think it's their ideas." With some students who she knew were "not putting out," Mrs. M would say "I would like to see another sentence" or "Add something else to it." Mrs. M illustrated in her practices that writing was a two-way venture. Writing was shared with the group a friend or posted for others to read. When Mrs. M listened to, or read, an individual's work, she commented using the author's words or questioned when something was not clear. She demonstrated and emphasized correct spacing of words to enhance readability. Children demonstrated their understanding of this concept by sharing and seeking reinforcement from Mrs. M as they worked on their writing. During the lessons Mrs. M demonstrated that writing was an alternate means of communicating. Communication began orally then Mrs. M encouraged children to write their ideas down so she could "read them whenever [she] wanted."

Within the sentence frame, Mrs. M invited original ideas and extensions. In one instance, she explained, "I was trying to extend ... trying to get them to find other words they could use to make it more descriptive and possibly more interesting." Illustrations were also made an important part of the writing experience; space was always provided for a picture. Several interactions with students reflect their concern of making their illustrations match the content of their writing.

Two superordinate constructs concerned the correctness and 'sense-making' aspect of writing and life in general. [M7 = We need to know how to do things, correct versus non-correct. There is a way that is acceptable; M9 = People try to make sense out of everything.] Numerous instances can be found within Mrs. M's practices which reflect these beliefs. Mrs. M employed patterns and frames in her writing program to illustrate the correct structure of our language. Within each lesson, the pattern was read, completed and re-read many times to instill the form in the minds of the students. Mrs. M also modelled correct spelling, printing, proper sentence form and illustrations to show the 'acceptable' way. During independent writing time, the majority of interactions with students focused on corrections. Mrs. M related, "As I go around ... I try to point out things that are missing. I will say, 'Look at that' or 'Read that again, I think you will find that you've left something out' or 'Are you sure?' and I try to do a lot of correcting and individual teaching in that way rather than group instruction. I also do a lot of work with spelling in that area." Spelling corrections often took the form of sounding words slowly so children could order and make sense of the letters. Mrs. M acknowledged that she monitored student writing and checked to see 'that it made sense.' In one instance, Mrs. M explained that she couldn't make sense of a sentence and asked the student to re-read and re-think what he wanted to say.

Mrs. M valued students taking risks in their writing as she believed life is an ongoing, changing process and in order to have changes, we must take risks [M1]. Mrs. M organized her approach to encourage her students to take risks within a controlled setting. For those who were cautious risk-takers, Mrs. M provided lists of brainstormed words and phrases which were read and reviewed many times "for some of those children who hadn't twigged in on anything they wanted to use to complete the frame." Mrs. M's generally supportive manner, and frequent use of praise also can be viewed as practices which invite students to take risks.

Mrs. M also valued quantity of writing as she believed it was necessary to extend ourselves in order to give society the most that we could [M6]. This belief statement is closely related to two other subordinate constructs which were previously discussed and verified in Mrs. M's practices. Additional support can be found in Mrs. M's aim for students to evaluate their own efforts, to "make them accountable for it." Mrs. M praised a student "for taking the initiative" by saying, "Oh, you have a long sentence. Good for you," but when questioned later by the student as to its acceptability, Mrs. M responded, "What do _you_ think of it?" She related, "I try to get them not to rely on my evaluation but on how they see it, are _they_ happy with it being what they wanted to produce."

The final belief statement expressed by Mrs. M dealt with the teacher's need to know and understand a child in order to do the most for him. Brainstorming sessions helped Mrs. M get a feel for children's backgrounds. As well, daily journal writing, to which she replied daily, gave students an alternative means of communicating with the teacher.

Two beliefs expressed by Mrs. M. set up a possible conflict within her classroom. On the one hand, Mrs. M. believed that risks had to be taken in order for changes in life to occur [M1] and many practices were noted that supported her belief in this area. She encouraged students to extend their writing, to go beyond the pattern or frame and to be creative. At the same time, Mrs. M's belief in knowing the correct versus non-correct way of doing things [M7] pervaded her teaching practices. Indeed, the most frequently noted practices were those involving correction or evaluation. In one instance, Mrs. M. showed the class a finished example of a shape book that the children were to work on that morning (i.e. the correct way). When one child chose to complete his book in a different way (i.e. taking a risk), Mrs. M. asked him to evaluate the product but then made the decision herself that it should be done as the others had been:

> Do you like it? Are you going to cut it out or leave it like that? Why don't you cut it out ... we can put it up for everyone to read.

This could suggest that Mrs. M.'s belief in correctness was of a higher order than her belief in taking risks.

In conclusion, the preceding analysis has shown that several practices were found to support all nine of Mrs. M.'s belief statements. This would indicate a positive congruence between Mrs. M.'s beliefs and practices.

TABLE NUMBER 10

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. M. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-work with frame sentence	"What I wanted to do was review the frame or basic structure that we had been working on orally ... I wanted to ... refresh their minds the way we had used it."	
-work with frame sentence	"I was trying to extend and get them to use other words ... to get them to change the phrase."	"To make it more descriptive and possibly more interesting."
-corrects 'grounded'	"simply correcting grammar."	
-shows teacher-made book	"basically modeling how I wanted it done."	
-points out author/ illustrator's name	"reinforcing the terminology, the writer and the illustrator."	
-review of instructions	"went back and reviewed the structure ... but then tried to get through to them the fact that it was their own."	
-statement about an individual made to the class	"I was hoping some of the others would get started ... I was pushing her."	"She is one of my brighter students ... I felt she could probably take off."

TABLE NUMBER 10

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. M. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-interactions with students during writing	"I gently nag ... as I go around and see things they have missed I try to point out that this is missing ... I do a lot of correcting and individual teaching in that way rather than group instruction ... I also do a lot of work with spelling ... some words I will tell them ... but often I will help them go through it and say 'Listen to the sounds you hear ... what says an "e"?' "	
-child looks for spelling	"I wouldn't let her (point out the word for another child) ... I really wanted to see if he could do it (himself)."	"he is one who will sit back and rest."
-missing punctuation in frame	"I stopped and pointed out ... I could have simply said, 'I didn't put the period here' but I wanted to see if any of them had twigged as to what it was all about."	
-praises individuals	"... trying to reinforce quality"	"when you are sure its the best you can do so to make them accountable for it rather than me saying it's not good enough."
-overall lesson	"What I was trying to do was to get them to extend their writing ... I wanted to do it through a lot of modeling with a lot of oral work first and then modeling and then extend writing."	

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE NUMBER 10

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. M. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-introducing frame sentence	"I was using another sentence frame but introducing them to the farm just with the knowledge they had ... I used the frame 'I know I was at the farm because ...' ... I asked them to finish the sentence orally ... I copied parts of their endings on to the blackboard so they could fall back on it if they needed to ... I told them that after recess they would be writing about it."	
-teacher-told story	"In order to get them into a mind set for it, I tried to get them to do a little bit .... I asked them to close their eyes and pretend, and then as I said the things that were going on, try to imagine ... you are on a farm ..."	"I did this to establish a mind set but also for some of those children who hadn't twigged in on anything that they wanted to use to complete the frame."
-oral work	"I asked a few children individually to complete the frame, and where it tied into something we had already done on the blackboard, I pointed it out."	
-reviewed ending	"I used a bit of an 'echo' approach where I said it, they said it."	"so they had to watch to see where the ending was if they needed to use the words that were there."
-individual help with sentence structure	"I was trying to get her to read it over and listen so that's what I did to have her correct."	"I didn't want to discourage her from using it because I had introduced where they could use 'and' if they wished."

TABLE NUMBER 10

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. M. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-work with an individual	"I was trying to get her to extend so I said 'Where are they swimming?' "	
-interacts with student	"I try to push them but I still try to get them to still think it's their work."	"I shouldn't say I always do because there are some children, I know, that are not putting out and so I would say 'I would like to see another sentence' or 'add something else to it.' "
-help with spelling	"I was trying to get her to listen to the sounds in order and self-correct her own spelling ... I did tell her there were double p's."	
-corrections	"I was checking to see if he had written the frame ... so that it made sense. We corrected 'can'. He started with a 'k' and I said to him, 'How do we spell "can"?'	"and I expected him to know how to spell it because we have used that frame 'I can see ...' so many times."
-help for illustrations	"He wanted to illustrate and I said, 'I don't know how to draw a cow', so I said, 'You could go find a cow and see if you could draw it from there.' "	
-interaction with girl	"She was just coming up for some positive reinforcement."	
-child asks for teacher's comments	"I try to get them not to rely on my evaluation but on how they see it."	

TABLE NUMBER 10

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES MRS. M. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Comments
-praises child	"I was very pleased that he was actually taking the initiative himself."	
-listens to story	"I waited because she relies a lot on someone to help her ... I didn't correct her at that point."	
-no illustration	"I sort of thought of the time commitment ... I didn't push her on it but what I did is try to get her to save face."	"I don't do it very often with her but once in a while she comes in and is having quite an off day."

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE NUMBER 11

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. M. LESSON ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-review names of rabbits which students had brainstormed on another day	
-uses a story frame, teacher begins the story and asks students to complete the frame	"Could you finish that story?"
-responds to, and praises, efforts made by students	"That's a good way to finish it."
-asks several students to create stories using the frame	
-points to words as students read the frame	
-has students brainstorm for other words for "like to eat"	"How do you eat?"
-repeats words while printing on board	
-corrected grammar	"Instead of 'grinded' we say 'ground'."
-asks students to create a story using the frame	
-explains spelling change from 'munch' to 'munched' by giving examples	"If you decide to use the word 'munch' we will have to leave the little ending off. He liked to munch and sometimes he munched."
-praises students as storytellers	"You are fantastic storytellers."
-sets purpose for writing	"Sometimes we don't have time to hear all your stories so if you write your story in your book, I can read it whenever I want."
-explains assignment using her own booklet.	
-models story form, and points out author, illustrator	"Listen to my story about Thumper. By Mrs. M. I wonder why I put that down there."

TABLE NUMBER 11

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. M. LESSON ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-has a student review the assignment	"Can anybody tell me what I want you to do this morning? ... Yes, do your best printing."
-reviews story frame	
-encourages children to be original	"Does your bunny have to be called 'Thumper'?"
-encourages illustration of story	
-reminds students where they could find the spelling of words	
-circulates and interacts with individuals	
-directs a student where to start the next line; points to page	"Go right back and start the word 'there' right there."
-praises student and encourages others to get on task	"A_____ has almost finished her story."
-questions students about story, praises ideas	"Very nice ... good for you."
-points to correct spelling in pocket chart	
-reads aloud what is written so far and helps child extend	"Who .... and then you have to tell what he liked to eat."
-helps child realize a word was omitted from frame	"Who what? Who liked? Well you don't have that word there. You just have 'pizza'."
-reads silently over a child's shoulder, makes no comment.	
-demonstrates spelling of a new word on the blackboard	"Here is the word N_____. It is for you."
-asks a child what a word will start with	"What is it going to start with? Good."

TABLE NUMBER 11

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. M. LESSON ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-helps a child sound out the spelling for 'happy'	"Listen, H____. What says 'a'? There are two p's. What says 'e' at the end of a word? It's up there."
-asks students to find a mistake on the chart (forgotten period)	"I wonder if anyone found a mistake. There is something missing ... I forgot to tell you I was finished."
-helps child spell 'singing' by sounding it out	"Sing-ing. What do you have to put in there?"
-points out a forgotten word in a child's story	"You forgot a word."
-listens to a child read her completed story and responds using the vocabulary of the story.	
-reminds about illustrations	"Don't forget to illustrate."
-helps a child locate a word in the pocket chart	"Where is the word 'was'? We use it a lot."
-instructs children what to do when they are finished	
-praises students on finished products	"Super job ... Good girl."

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE NUMBER 11

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. M. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
This lesson had been preceded by another lesson in which Mrs. M had the class close their eyes while she described an imaginary trip to the farm, including things a person might see. Then Mrs. M introduced the frame "I know I was at a farm because ____." Students brainstormed for sights and sounds of the farm and practiced using the frame with the endings they had supplied. The videotaped lesson involved individual writing by students using this frame.	
-helps student with spelling	"There is a tricky letter at the beginning. What is it? – Good."
-directs student to space words correctly	"Can I put my fingers between these words?"
-reinforces the pattern with one student	"You forgot to put the beginning of the sentence."
-reads child's writing out loud to help child hear a mistake; suggests using 'because' instead of 'and'	
-praises student	"Oh, I see a really good one."
-suggests extending the pattern with one student	"Where were they swimming? Why don't you continue that and make a longer sentence?"
-reads child's work and encourages extension with another student	"Could you tell me something else? Would you like to put another sentence there?"

TABLE NUMBER 11

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. M. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-sounds word for child who has difficulty with spelling	
-reminds student to keep on task	
-points to words on blackboard in response to question regarding spelling	
-points to words as child reads. Helps with spelling of 'stopped' by asking child to listen to sounds and translate into letters	"Listen, C____. Listen to the order of the letters. I think you have them in the wrong order. S - T - O - two P's. Now what do have on the end? Good."
-listens to child read. Tells child a question mark is needed at the end.	
-helps child with spelling by pointing to rhyming word on the board.	"Here is 'would'. How would you spell 'could'? Right."
-listens to child read. Helps with spelling.	"Can. What does 'can' start with?"
-suggests sources for pictures	
-praises student	"Oh, lovely, oh great, a nice sunny day."

TABLE NUMBER 11

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. M. LESSON TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTES FROM TEACHER
-reminds students of time to finish	"When the big hand gets to the one I would like you to be finished."
-child shares with teacher and teacher asks child to evaluate	"How do you think? Do you like it? Are you going to cut it out or leave it like that? Why don't you cut it out ... we can put it up for everyone to read."
-praises child for writing a long sentence.	"Oh, you're putting a long sentence. Good for you."
-listens to child read. Questions about illustration.	"Is that the path the horses took?"

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 12

MRS. M.

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
1. students taking a risk	M1 = Life is an ongoing changing process and in order to have changes we must take risks.
2. extending an idea or pattern 11. using their own ideas	M2 = Writing is an alternate method of communication.
3. answers written in complete sentences 8. readability - spacing of words	M3 = Writing is a two-way venture.
4. using writing as an alternate means of communicating with the teacher	M4 = If teachers want to do the most, give the maximum to the children, they must know and understand the child.
5. extended sentences - use of connectives	M5 = Interesting writing will attract more readers.
6. quantity of writing	M6 = In order to give society the most that we can, we must constantly extend ourselves and change to suit the situation we are in.
7. framing work (structure) 12. capitals and punctuation	M7 = We need to know how to do things, correct versus non-correct. There is a way that is acceptable.

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
9. illustrations	M8 = A person should get the maximum out of what they read (what is written).
10. ability to use singular and plural	M9 = People try to make sense out of everything.

Teacher Profile Number Five: Mr. G.

Classroom Description and Observation

Mr. G.'s grade six class was situated in a self-contained classroom. Desks were arranged in rows facing the front while a few tables at the rear provided space for group work. The cloakroom area was partitioned off and had been converted into a quiet area ["Care Room"] with cushions on the floor. A carrel area was provided at the side of the room in front of the teacher's desk. One rear corner was set up as a writing centre; writing materials, writing folders, publishing information and a conference table were housed there. Student writing was displayed on a rear bulletin board.

Mr. G. identified his students as a heterogeneous group from a varied socio-economic neighbourhood. Students appeared stimulated by the writing experiences and were familiar with the routines employed. They worked well during the writing period and moved around and conversed freely. Writing was often an activity chosen in free time.

Overview of the Writing Program

The questionnaire enabled Mr. G. to explain his overall writing program. He indicated that he used a conference approach to writing which "gives the writer as much ownership of her writing as possible." The writing program, exclusive of writing incorporated directly into other subject areas, constituted one hundred and fifty (150) minutes per week divided into three time blocks. Writing was scheduled after a recess break.

Mr. G. saw the main purpose for writing in his classroom as one of providing children with an opportunity to do "meaningful writing." It also enabled him to work on a "one-to-one level" with the children and their writing. He aimed towards having students attempt different types of writing including research. He stated that he wanted students to be able to identify their errors and correct them. Typically the types of written work Mr. G.'s students did included research papers, personal letters, poems, jokes, narratives, expositions, descriptions and limericks. He stated he was satisfied with the kind of written work done because "the children have control or ownership of their writing." Mr. G. verified that ninety percent of the time students choose their own topics; in the remaining time, he set the topics. Mr. G. felt that the writing program enabled him to work closely with students to help them help themselves, as well as giving him an opportunity to get to know the students better.

Mr. G. felt writing enabled his students to explore topics of interest, correct their own errors, share their work and help others with writing problems. He stated, "it would make a better program if this writing program was used in the grade levels before mine."

Mr. G.'s responses to the questionnaire indicated that he felt writing should take place after students have had a break. Sometimes writing was preceded by a lesson on a particular skill needed by the class in general, or occasionally, students were given a model to follow. The writing period typically began with a 5 - 10 minute period of sustained silent writing. Mr. G. himself wrote during this time. Then Mr. G. circulated and had "unscheduled conferences" with students. If students were experiencing some difficulty during the writing, Mr. G. related that he usually left them for a few minutes to think and then "got them talking. They usually have the answers." Each writing period included scheduled conferences as well, when assigned groups of students met at the rear conference table. Each student shared his/her writing with Mr. G., then the writing, or problems were discussed. The group was able to contribute to the discussion.

Mr. G. acknowledged that he kept records of the problems each child had. Students were asked to record their problems in the back of their writing folder as well. During the conference sessions, Mr. G. helped students with their particular skill weaknesses on a one-to-one basis. He reported that he helped the student realize what the error was and how to correct it.

Mr. G. related that not all writing reached a "final copy" stage. Rough copies of writing were kept by students in their writing folders so that they might return to them if they wished. Usually a written piece was seen by Mr. G. several times as it was being revised. Final copies were either kept in the folders, or displayed if a student wished to share it. Occasionally, Mr. G. asked students to submit a few pieces which they considered their best for evaluation. Writing was directed to friends, other classes, parents, the principal, businesses and the teacher.

Instructional Practices as Identified by Mr. G.

Two videotaped lessons provided the stimulus for Mr. G. to identify and comment on particular instructional practices he employed in his teaching. The two lessons were taped during the same school week. Due to the comprehensive nature of Mr. G.'s writing program, the two videotaped lessons did not include examples of all types of practices. Mr. G. took the opportunity to elaborate on these at various points in the viewing session. Table 13 presents a compendium of practices as identified by Mr. G..

Mr. G. identified a number of procedural practices. These included the schedule of events in the writing block, rules for silent writing and the "Care" room and procedures for helping oneself through a writer's block. Most practices that were identified revolved around the conferencing of individuals. Mr. G. cited instances of reading pieces, re-telling the contents to the author and questioning the writer regarding future plans. He also identified practices of record keeping on his part and on the part of the student. He pointed out several occurrences of role-modelling. Mr. G. acknowledged that in his many interactions with students, his practice was to let the student carry the conversation and make the decisions.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by the Researcher

Two videotaped lessons were viewed in order to ascertain instructional practices Mr. G. employed in his writing program. Table 14 presents a list of researcher-identified practices for Mr. G..

In general, the researcher identified more practices specific to the videotaped lessons whereas the teacher had utilized the videotapes as a stimulus to discuss his general strategies for teaching writing and his philosophies behind them. The identifiable strategies did not necessarily coincide sequentially through the lessons. Researcher-identified practices included review of procedures, modelling of writing, individual interactions with students and disciplinary actions. As well, the researcher noted the repeated conference procedures undertaken by Mr. G.: reading of student writing, retelling of the story, mentioning of features he liked, questioning the student about contents of the story and future plans for the story. The researcher also identified frequent practices of record-keeping on the part of Mr. G..

Values and Beliefs

Through the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure, a detailed view of Mr. G.'s values and beliefs about writing emerged. Table 15 contains the valued qualities as Mr. G. expressed them. The subordinate constructs suggest a valuing of quality writing which shows evidence of organization, effort and correctness. Several constructs suggest the importance of the individual's attitude and his control over writing.

Mr. G. reduced his twelve subordinate constructs to six superordinate constructs or belief statements. These centered around two human qualities: developing self-identity and the caring/desire to improve oneself.

Relationships Between Beliefs and Practices

A comparison of Mr. G.'s beliefs and practices illuminated an interesting correspondence. Two subordinate constructs led to a belief statement dealing with students showing concern for their writing through revision and organization. [G1 = Writing would be meaningless if they didn't care about it.] Mr. G. subscribed to several practices which illustrate this belief. He demonstrated through his individual conferences with students that he cared about their writing. After reading each piece silently, Mr. G. retold the story back to the student and stated features he really liked. He then asked for further information and listened carefully, asking questions when necessary. He demonstrated that he "cared" about them, their writing, and their progress.

Notations of conference details were kept and referred to from conference to conference. In this way, Mr. G. helped his students see that their writing was meaningful to him and nurtured a caring attitude toward their own writing. Mr. G. encouraged students to discuss their writing with their peers. He explained, "You want the talking part and this does not happen unless you allow the kids to talk to other kids about it." Peer conferencing occurred throughout the writing time and followed the same process as the teacher conference. Mr. G. stated that he felt the students were getting more adept at stating their plans and had more "direction" in planning. He said, "I think the training for that happens in the conference; they get used to that and they use it all the time." In this way, Mr. G. fostered a caring attitude among his students for each other's writing.

Mr. G.'s conferencing also aided students in the planning and organizing phases of their writing. One of the main components of each conference was when Mr. G. asked the student what was going to happen next. "I ask where is it going to go from here and watch so that I don't make a bunch of suggestions where I think it should go from here, then their writing is much more meaningful to them and it just works much better." Mr. G. confirmed that his questioning often was to check that the student "has some direction" to what he is writing. He acknowledged that students "plan" in different ways; some "plan as you go" and others "have the ability to tell you the whole thing", sometimes the "planning is inside" and at times "the planning is on paper."

Five subordinate constructs and their two related belief statements dealt with the notion of striving to improve oneself, and one's writing and producing a quality product [G2 = If you care about the writing, it's worthwhile doing it well; G4 = The desire to realistically improve oneself is an inherent human quality and makes for a better life].

It was noted that in generating these constructs, Mr. G. was referring to finished products or "final drafts." He tried to dispel the notion that "good copy" simply meant that the piece was written neatly. He stated "What I am trying to make them realize is that, just as important ... is that they have revised it content-wise." Mr. G. felt his students revised their work because they wanted to make it better for themselves and the people they shared it with rather than for evaluation purposes. He allowed freedom of choice for which pieces would be revised and at what speed. He related incidents where students had gone through up to six revisions with a piece by working on it, leaving it for a time and picking up on it again later. He modelled techniques for making revisions by revising his own writing in front of the class, using an overhead projection of his story and saying, "I don't know if this is the right word

also demonstrated that double-spacing made revisions easier. Mr. G. felt that by asking his students about his own writing problems, he became "more of a partner with writing." Suggestions and discussions about adding, deleting and changing parts of the story helped the students realize that everyone's writing can be improved. Mr. G. concluded "if they can do it with my writing, I think they feel more comfortable ... and it spins off with them as well."

Mr. G.'s approach to writing and revision was summed up in this quotation:

> Writing is a lot like sculpture. You build it all up, then if you don't like it, you scrunch it all up and you build it up again and try to improve on it or you cover it up and put it aside and model something else from it .... I don't think anyone can say that writing isn't a lot of work and revision and effort to make it good .... You must structure a system that allows children to do that.

The writing period in Mr. G.'s class reflected this 'workshop' approach.

Conferences allowed Mr. G. to give attention to individuals regarding their personal writing concerns or problems. "Parroting" back the story permitted the child to pick up misconceptions or "things they think they have communicated but they haven't clearly enough." This gave the student the opportunity to receive audience feedback and revise his story if he so wished. Conferences also allowed Mr. G. to meet each student at his own writing ability level and to work on skills each individual needed. He kept a skills checklist for each student and each student kept a copy of the checklist in his writing folders. As particular skills were worked on, and demonstrated correctly in their writing, Mr. G. would enter it on the checklist. Student referred to these checklists as a guide when revising their writing. Mr. G. stated, "I think this is a much more viable, much more personal, much more successful method of working on skills than ... group (lessons) ... Eventually to have it be meaningful you've got to look at the student's work." This "personal" approach to skills had a direct application to the child's writing that worksheets failed to have in Mr. G.'s experience. During one conference Mr. G. explained that the checklist and writing sample showed that "he (the student) can use paragraphing in his writing, he's worked on it, he's worked on correcting that skill, I see evidence that he can do it, it's done."

Four subordinate constructs clustered around the idea of pride in ownership and taking control of various aspects of the writing process including topic choice, production pace, and the decision to revise. These constructs lead to two related belief statements [G3 = Self-identity is an essential of life and comes through meaningful communication; G5 = Your experiences help you identify yourself; then you can take things on, progress and enjoy life].

Mr. G. incorporated several practices in his writing program that support these beliefs. Topic choice was made entirely by the students and students were observed writing on a wide variety of topics. When choosing topics, Mr. G. asked his students to write down no less than four topic choices at a time. He would then ask, "Which one would you like to write about right now?" This two-stage decision-making process facilitated the "zeroing in" on a topic while adding possibilities for future writing. Students were also given control of dropping a topic although Mr. G. discouraged the practice of jumping from topic to topic without completing some. During one conference he asked a student why she had discontinued work on a topic. When the problem was lack of information rather than lack of interest, Mr. G. facilitated the location of materials so the student could continue. He related, "I don't like them to abandon topics unless they just can't get on but by the same token I don't make them hold on ... sometimes having them work on a stale topic is as bad as putting a topic up on the board and just assuming everyone is going to be fired up about it."

Control of a writing piece was fostered during conference discussions. When students experienced some problems, Mr. G. would often offer suggestions, or ask questions, so students would see possibilities, but the final decision was left to the student ("It's up to you ... what would you do?"). During one conference, Mr. G. asked a student for more information, indicating his interest and the possible concerns other readers of the story might have. He related in the interview following the lesson, "I knew if she does that (add to the story) it's going to be better ... but in the end of it you've got to let her make the decision." Mr. G. had students take control of their writing during revision as well. First, the decision to revise a piece was left to each student. Checklists of skills aided students by guiding them towards possible areas for revision.

Embedded in his belief regarding meaningful communication, Mr. G. valued the sustained flow of writing. To promote this, he began each writing period with a five-to-ten minute silent writing time, when everyone, including the teacher, just wrote. Mr. G. encouraged the flow of writing to continue by letting student discuss ideas with peers or himself first before beginning to compose. This was often a technique used by Mr. G. in conferences when he asked students what their plans were for a story or what would happen next. At times Mr. G. had to place some restrictions upon students to ensure the flow of ideas would not be hindered by other behaviours. In one instance Mr. G. made a suggestion to a group of girls to facilitate their group project. He stated, "They're getting into a speed problem and what that's going to do is hinder their idea flow." Occasionally, Mr. G. would initialize the point students were at in the beginning of the writing period to encourage them to keep writing.

Mr. G. indicated that he valued pride in ownership on the part of the students in their writing. This he nurtured by encouraging students to illustrate their stories. A bulletin board was designed to house student writing which the students displayed voluntarily. A publishing center complete with materials and directions for making and binding books was available in the writing corner.

Finally Mr. G. valued students showing an interest in writing. This quality was based on the belief that "If students handled many things in life in a similar manner to what I hope they would handle writing, they would do all right" [G6]. This belief was apparent in the total approach to writing in Mr. G.'s classroom. Writing was made very personal as students wrote about things they knew or that interested them. Students were allowed control over their writing from choice of topic to the decision to revise to the option of sharing their work or keep it to themselves. They were able to choose the writing that would be evaluated. Mr. G. demonstrated an interest in the topics they talked about and the stories they wrote; he displayed an interest in writing himself. In all, Mr. G. tried to show that writing was a vital way of communicating; writing had a purpose. He concluded:

> I think a lot of times we fall into the trap of believing that if we have the children writing for our purpose, they are writing for a purpose ... I would venture to guess that .... them sitting down and writing out stuff that is extremely personal and very important to them is much more important than any assignment that we give them ... The purpose of this technique is to try to get children to take charge of their writing and the more that you can do that, the better off they are.

The preceding analysis has shown that all of Mr. G.'s beliefs were supported by specific instructional practices. In conclusion, it would appear that Mr. G.'s practices and beliefs are congruent.

TABLE 13

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
reviews procedures	I am giving this preamble.	because the writing period is a long block of time ... they have a tendency to forget
	I just do a review at the start, especially reviewing with them how to respond to each other.	
silent writing time	Everybody writes for five minutes.	The rule is leave me alone, leave everyone alone and just write
teacher writes	It's a role model thing if they see me writing.	I'm just writing a thing on a bicycle tour that I did down East.
getting settled into writing	I try to clear any questions that there might be ... really quickly.	
revision	What I am trying to make them realize is that just as important ... is that they have revised it content-wise.	
teacher-sharing	Frequently what I'll do when I share is I write it out on a transparency and I'll put it up and say, "I don't know if this is the right word ..."	
sharing in "Care" Room	I'm just re-explaining the sharing technique with them.	
conferences with group members	What I'm going to move into now is my first conference with my first group.	The little bible (book I'm carrying around) is simply a record of those conferences.
	I read it, tell them what I have read, I then tell them what I liked about it ... and then ask for more information.	The process that I use is exactly the same as the one I ask them to use in peer conferencing.

TABLE 13

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
conferences with group members	I'm 'parroting' back to the student.	I think it does two things. One, it is a nice thing to have people tell you what you said ... two, ... it will pick up misconceptions that the child or you have because either you read it wrong or ... things they think they have communicated but they haven't clearly enough.
skill conference	After we do the content then we go into a skill and I go back to what we were working on before. They have in their writing folder a skill checklist and what they do is that I write in my book, they write in their writing folder and as I go along I will look at them and say, "Okay, you have corrected all of these, I don't expect them to be a problem anymore."	It gives them a checklist that they can go back on and correct before they hand it in to me.
writing folders	I refuse to let them throw anything out	
conference with an individual	What I am doing with M____ right now is I'm reading his stuff ... telling him what I read ... M____ is an example of 'write-as-you-go' ... what I am doing is making sure M____ has some direction.	
unscheduled conferences	I've finished the conference with that particular group and now I am spending some time with the children who have been patient enough to wait ... I just kind of circulate around and remember that I've talked to people. I date the notations that go in my book.	Much of what happens of course is kids telling you what they are going to do and what I end up saying is, "Oh, that's really neat .... Where did you think it's going to go from there?"

TABLE 13

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
interaction with student	I'm just flipping through (a reference book) I'm interested — I don't like the term 'warm fuzzies' but I guess that's kind of what it is.	
individual conference	B____ said "I'm not going to do this!" — I asked, "Would you still like to do it?" I just wanted to see if she still wanted to do it.	I don't like them to abandon topics unless they just can't get on with it.
student revising a piece	I'm just reading through it to make sure I know what is going on and again I ask S____ "Where are you going to go from there?" even though she is in a revision.	Essentially when they are revising they are evaluating their own work.
discusses drawing with student	He's stuck with writing — He feels it's necessary to draw it first before he writes. Okay, I'm willing to let a little bit of writing time go so that he can do that.	
teacher sharing writing	I've asked kids stuff about my own writing. I've said, "What do you guys think?" ...	— and if they can do it with my writing, I think they feel more comfortable.
deals with students not using time well	I initialize where they are.	You have to give them a little reminder - don't get off topic here.
student blocked on information	I just took off a piece of paper and I said, "Here, look it up under these two headings. Maybe you're just not quite looking in the right place."	I didn't go down and open the book for her but I did give her a way that she can go and search it.
skills	I have tried to expose them to as many of them (skills) as I can.	I guess that I have taken the stance that I might as well work on — the one he knows well now and 2 or 3 or 4 and work on those and the rest of them I'll pick up and work on as they come along.

END OF TAPED SESSION

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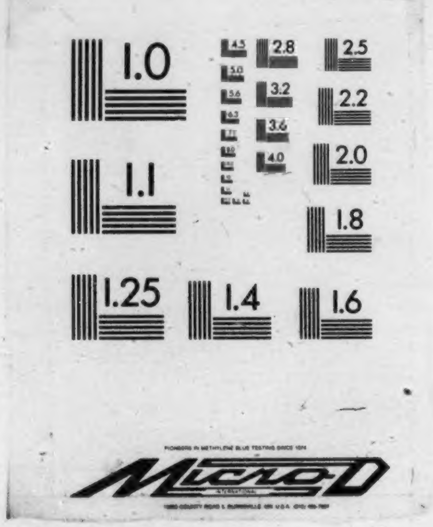
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TABLE 13

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
introduction to quiet writing	The only thing I am doing here is essentially the same thing that I was doing before and that's making sure if we are going to have 5 minutes of writing ... you've got to be dead quiet.	
writing by teacher	Another reason I write is as a role model ... then I make it into transparencies and they can see it ... What I do is double-space ... I'm trying to get them to realize that double spacing has a nice thing of being able to alter and change and it's part of the revision idea.	
conferences	I sometimes use more silliness than other teachers would be comfortable with but I find it makes it much easier for me.	
	I don't forbid kids to interrupt ...	They get peer interaction, peer approval and peer interest.
student has problem with research	I've just set her down and said, "Okay. Do two things. Write down what you know about them (U.F.O.'s) and on the flip side ... write down what you plan to do.	
interaction with student	This is back to R____ and his drawing and talking.	
	This is just about ____ asking if she could go to the library ... I put a time limit on it.	
	G____ has brought along what he plans to do with his next one and I spend some time reading about it.	

TABLE 13

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER TWO: Continued

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
girls working in a group	The problem I was dealing with here is that ... the means is becoming more important than the end ... as what I've done is ... I said, "This is a suggestion."	
interaction with student	M_____ has a problem here ... so I just threw some offers at him ... and said, "What would you do?"	
interaction with student	I just said to her, "Are you having problems with your writing? ... Let's talk about it and let's see if we can resolve it."	
spelling and punctuation	I've told them when you don't know, circle it and continue on. If you don't know punctuation, draw a box where you think and carrying on.	This mechanics stuff is only important in the final proof reading process ... I think what a teacher has to tell them is it doesn't have to be perfect the first shot.
reacts to student's writing	I got to the third step which is asking for more information and I said in reading this I was interested in this, this and this and you can be sure that anyone else reading it is going to have the same interested concerns.	I know if she does all that she knows it's going to be better but you've got to let her make the decision.
helps new student	I said, "That is really neat. What were some of the things you did there?" ... then let her get on telling me and then you just try to shut up and listen.	You get the verbal communication and then you get the written.
interaction with student	She has a real hassle with trying to express exactly what she wants to do so I'm always asking her, "What do you want to do?" ... and then I ask her about 3 more times ... eventually she does ... she gets quite clear.	
END OF TAPED SESSION		

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-teacher reviews procedures and expectations for writing class	Just to do a quick review of what should happen in this period of time.
-explains possibility of sharing time, resumption of journal writing on Friday	We will see if we can do some sharing on Friday ... also there has been some requests to do journal writing ... give you some specific topics to write on.
-teacher writes with class for approximately 5 minutes	You work on your writing and I'll work on mine.
-teacher calls Group 1 for conferences	
-gives guidelines for students using "Care" Room	A maximum of six people in the Care Room.
-reminds students about sharing - peer conferencing	Repeat what you've heard, tell what you liked and ask for more information.
-begins conference with individual, consults record book	Okay. Last time we were talking about Greek gods.
-reads what student has written	Last time you had a "rough" beginning. Let me read what you have done with it.
-teacher retells what he has read and asks questions.	I'm not clear on the reason why ... I didn't realize that Zeus and Hera were the mother and father.
-teacher indicates what he liked about the story	I like the fact that you have done this with Greek Gods.
-teacher asks abut future plans for the story and listens as student explains.	Where is it going from here?
-teacher makes note of conference in record book.	
-checks on skill progresssion	A long time ago we talked about capitalizing titles ... it looks like you have corrected that.

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-notes that next individual dropped his last topic; questions why this occurred. Notes new topic, reads what the student has written; receives writing by telling student what he has read	Your topic is "The Kidnapping." May I read?
-tells student the part he likes best	I like that, the part about the zig-zagging idea.
-asks student about plans for story; listens	What is going to happen from here?
-concludes conference	Skill-wise, it looks pretty good.
-begins third conference. Cautions student not to spend too much time on names of characters. Lets student continue writing.	Try to spend as little time as possible getting the guys straight and get to the writing. Okay?
-(Fourth conference) Reads, retells stories and mentions a part he likes. Questions where the story will go. Checks skill progression. Notes of conference made, concludes conference.	Last time we mentioned a new paragraph for each person talking ... I also said at that time that we could worry about that when you went into revision.
-gets student back on task	
-discusses problem with student informally	
-disciplines students in "Care Room."	
-visits students at desks to help with problems.	Okay. Does anybody need any help before I work with the other group?
-Student shares a reference book; teacher reads parts and discusses	
-begins next conference. Reviews what was discussed last time. Makes suggestion to revise before doing final copy. Concludes conference.	What has happened since?

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-moves to next individual. Reminds student of last conference. Reads, reviews, and mentions part he likes. Questions student and makes notes.	I would like to know where you will go from here. I'll just put that you are still on your first revision.
-questions student regarding a "dropped" topic. Notes that it is on hold.	Would you consider ... taking another crack at it?
-discusses "group" story with girls.	I want to know how you are writing this ... give me a brief rundown.
-returns to whole class and discusses individual concerns.	
-helps student organize writing based on scale drawing of a house	
-disciplines girls working on group story	
-reminds student to do all revisions before it goes to typist	You finish off your "rough" and then we'll edit it.
-makes a mark on group work and cautions students not to waste time	It will be easy to tell where you were — now you know if there's nothing past that point, what will happen?
-gives suggestions where information may be found in the library.	There are a couple of different names for the same thing ....
-discusses differences in types of encyclopedias with a student.	
-checks on progress of group working at the table	We have three sentences .. talking is fine as long as you are not spending all your time ...
-checks students in "Care Room"	
-discusses problems with researching	
-ends class END OF TAPED SESSION	Okay. Close up shop. Writing folders away.

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-explanation regarding portable microphone	
-introduction of silent writing, explains what to do if they have nothing to write	For those who don't know what to write, sit down and try to dream up as many topics as you can even if they are way out.
-asks for questions or concerns before starting and deals with them	
-gives directions to those in Care Room	One more time, if there is any talking in the Care Room, you'll have to come back out.
-teacher writes along with students	
-calls first group to conference	If you are stuck on something, I'll be free in about 10 minutes and we can talk
-allows some students to go to library	
-reminds students about procedure for sharing	
-directs student to ask librarian for help	
-begins conference. Tells student what he remembers aobut the story, gets confirmation from the student	The last time I left you, you were working on "Bigfoot"
-reads the story silently. Comments on parts he likes	I'm also glad to see you are using new paragraphs when people are talking.
-questions student and clarifies	From here, what happens? ... after that?
-asks student for questions or concerns, ends conference.	

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-deals with student having problems with research; suggest she writes what she knows and what she wants to find out	
-second conference. Reminds student about discussion yesterday and makes note in record book	
-tells student to circle word requiring spelling help	
-questions student regarding his procedure for writing	Did you draw the basement? so you are drawing, then writing?
-reads and retells	I just read the main floor. Now you told me you are going to have a hockey rink ...
-questions student about future plans	What are you going to have on the second and third floor?
-writes notes in record book	
-third conference. Reminds student about discussion yesterday	
-reads story silently	
-asks students who are noisy to leave Care Room	
-reviews story he has read and tells what he likes.	I like the name.
-asks for more explanation/clarification	Regarding more information, I would like to know what Pavlov looks like.
-asks student about future plans and discusses	
-makes notes in record book, ends conference	

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-makes announcement to class about individual help	Okay, I've got about 5 minutes here to see people who need individual help.
-makes suggestions to a group of writers about how they can work more efficiently	Maybe you could say, "I'll write for 5 minutes then you write for 5 minutes" ... That is just a suggestion.
-tells student that he would like to see hamster story tomorrow	
-disciplines students in Care Room	
-discusses "writer's block" with student; listens to problem and makes suggestions	Why are you 'jammed'?
-suggests student brainstorm for new topic ideas	Are you finished? ... Why don't you ... scribble out a few more topics and I'll have a peek at that in about one minute.
-listens to story idea, praises	
-suggests "names" for student who is 'stuck' - then suggests leaving a blank and filling in names later	Why don't you make it Shirley ____ ... and later you can fill it in.
-disciplines 'group' writers	
-calls for next conference group	
-initials students' work who are not producing	If you are going to be here for 10 - 15 minutes, you've got to show me 10 - 15 minutes of work.
-suggests that a student write what she wants to find out about U.F.O.'s	
-begins conferences	

TABLE 14

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MR. G. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-discusses topic (Birds) with student, helps to narrow it, makes notation in record book	Let's see if we can help you out a bit
-moves to next conference, tells student about last conference, reads story silently, receives story, tells what he enjoyed, asks where story will go, asks for more information	I would like to know a bit more about your friend ... something I wondered about was ...
-third conference: discusses, reads, reviews, questions, states what he likes and listens while student plans next; questions to help student extend the story	It doesn't actually say that so maybe ... that would be something interesting to add.
-moves to next conference; reads; questions word; tells student to circle words where spelling is unknown	I'll just give you a little help ... this is how you spell alien.
-tells other students to get ready for dismissal	
-makes record of conference	
-notes "bird" topic from other student	
-asks student what sort of help she needs	Okay, M____, what did you want me to do?
-asks students to line up	
END OF TAPED SESSION	

TABLE 15 MR. G.

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
1. revision 9. organization	G1. Writing would be meaningless if they didn't care about it.
2. evidence of planning. 7. quality product 10. effort 11. mechanics - spelling, punctuation, pargraphs	G2. If you care about the writing it's worthwhile doing it well.
3. keeping the writing flowing (in first draft) 4. taking control of writing 6. variety	G3. Self-identity is an essential of life and that comes through meaningful communication.
5. evidence of improvement (correcting a skill) within a student's ability	G4. The desire to realistically improve oneself is an inherent human quality and makes for a better life.
8. pride in ownership	G5. Your experiences help you identify yourself; then you can take things on, progress, and enjoy life.
12. self-interest in writing	G6. If students handled many things in life in a similar manner to what I hope they would handle writing they would do all right.

Teacher Profile Number Six: Mrs. E.

Classroom Description and Observation

The split four/five class taught by Mrs. E. was housed in a self-contained classroom. A loft area provided space for individual work. Desks were arranged in clusters of various sizes and arrangements. A table was located at the rear of the room but due to high enrollment (31 students), it was used as desk space for students. Written work by students in the form of brainstormed word lists, books, stories and reports were displayed around the room and in the hallway.

Mrs. E. identified her students as a heterogeneous group from a varied socio-economic background. They were an energetic group and had some difficulty settling down to their writing tasks. Some students were disruptive and kept others from working. Students generally remained in their desks. Some movement occurred when they wished to speak with Mrs. E. A minimum of discussion occurred. Students chose to write in their diaries when their work was completed.

Overview of the Writing Program

Mrs. E.'s approach to writing was based on her view of writing as a "necessary life time skill" which she, personally, found to be enjoyable. She stated, "It's my purpose to share this delight with others. I want the children to want to write and enjoy it." Mrs. E. also saw writing as a means to "develop individual student's creativity, vocabulary, experience and knowledge of writing."

Mrs. E. reported that she had her students do a variety of writing. Often the class modelled their writing on books, poems or phrases, or related their creative writing to themes the group was exploring. Mrs. E. also identified diaries and reports as written work typically set for the class and indicated she would like to expand her assignments to include letter writing and conversational style. Mrs. E. stated that she was satisfied with the work she assigned because it gave "every child freedom to write at their own level using whatever skills they (had)." Time restraints were cited as a problem in implementing the program. Mrs. E. wrote, "At first creative writing took a long time, having been trained to 'fill-in-the-blanks.' The children are now beginning to work faster."

Mrs. E. stated that her main purposes for writing were to develop individual creativity, vocabulary, experience and knowledge of writing as well as to provide enjoyment from writing. She thought her students were able to write fluently, and creatively, after group-brainstorming. She aimed to have her students "feel comfortable with story writing." Mrs. E. felt the writing allowed her to assess her students' understanding of the writing concepts taught and thus enabled her to direct her teaching to her student's weak points. She saw writing as a way her students could gain feedback from her and their peers. It also gave them practice in expressing themselves, enlarging their vocabulary and expanding their writing styles. Mrs. E. cited a lack of time for research and preparation as a factor which kept her from reaching her expectations for the writing program. She felt some students were kept from reaching her goals because of the range of ability and application. "Some students do not or cannot perform at a high level or for any length of time."

The physical preparations Mrs. E. made for writing included the provision of writing materials, a quiet atmosphere and a personal writing space for each student. Writing was scheduled on a daily basis in the afternoons. Mrs. E. estimated that writing constituted 150 or more minutes per week but indicated that she would prefer writing time to be "flexible and free."

Mrs. E.'s response to the questionaire indicated that prior to writing she would typically have students brainstorm for vocabulary and ideas, think about and discuss the topic and "plan it in their heads first." Mrs. E. stated that she would provide visual or auditory stimuli to initiate writing, explain the task at hand or write for the children "to act as a model." While students were writing, Mrs. E. indicated that she would write too, answer questions and circulate to "help the slow starters."

If students were experiencing some difficulty during writing, Mrs. E. explained that she would implement several strategies. She might review the topic or "feed in ideas." Sometimes she read them the beginning of her story or asked students to read their started stories and share their ideas. Mrs. E. dealt with writing skills as the need arose with individual students. "We agree to zero in on one or two things rather than everything."

Mrs. E. indicated that she chose the topics for writing based on the theme. After the initial theme writing project, students chose writing topics. Students always wrote to share with their peers and occasionally with other classes. Sometimes the writing was "published" and displayed on the walls of the school or the books were donated to the library. This writing was corrected, edited and rewritten. At times, writing was thrown away, by student choice, or simply left. ("If it isn't interesting, it's not worth their time to pursue polishing it.")

Instructional Practices as Perceived by Mrs. E.

Two videotaped lessons were utilized by Mrs. E. to identify and comment on instructional practices she employed in teaching writing. The lessons were videotaped during the same week. One lesson involved pre-writing and writing activities based on parachuting while the other continued the writing process to the publishing of the stories in a class book. Both lessons lasted approximately 45 minutes. Table 16 presents the practices as identified by Mrs. E..

Mrs. E. identified a number of pre-writing practices. These included review of previous discussions and brainstorming ideas, building of background through visual and oral modes and the sharing of ideas from the teacher or other students to begin a story. Reviewing of instructions was also identified as a key practice. Editing and correcting procedures were the most frequently noted practices in the second lesson.

Instructional Practices as Perceived by the Researcher

The researcher viewed the two videotaped lessons in order to identify the specific instructional practices employed by Mrs. E. in teaching writing. Table 17 presents a list of researcher-identified practices for Mrs. E..

Identifiable practices included reviewing and reminding students of previous lessons, rules and/or procedures, active use of terminology (pertaining to the theme), praising of students and setting definite expectations for tasks. In the first lesson building background and setting the stage for writing (using visual and auditory stimuli) were noted as frequent practices. Editing and correcting practices were most evident in the second lesson. In both lessons, the sharing or the facilitating of sharing was a common practice.

Values and Beliefs

Through the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure, a detailed view of Mrs. E.'s values and beliefs emerged. Table 18 contains the actual valued qualities as expressed by Mrs. E. as she referred to samples of her students' writing. The subordinate constructs suggest a valuing of creative and imaginative ideas that remain within the parameters of the assignment (patterning, modelling, vocabulary usage, point of view). Many of the constructs imply the importance of sharing writing and therefore, an emphasis on mechanical correctness, style and vocabulary.

Mrs. E. reduced her fifteen subordinate constructs to nine superordinate constructs or belief statements. These reflect a very positive approach to life in general, and writing, in particular; life and language are stimulating, something everyone should experience to the fullest and share with others.

Relationship Between Beliefs and Practices

A comparison of Mrs. E.'s beliefs and practices was made. Four related superordinate constructs [E1, E5, E6, E9) found their focus in most of Mrs. E.'s practices. These dealt with the sharing of oneself and one's writing with others based on the belief that everyone has much to contribute. In sharing, both the physical appearance and the content were important. [E1 = It is important to leave a record of ourselves, everyone has much to contribute to life; E5 = Sharing with others is what life is all about; E6 = Writing must be interesting for both the reader and writer; E9 = Writing reflects thoughts, dreams, fantasy - Vocabulary help to communicate your feelings.] These beliefs were discernible in Mrs. E.'s approach to writing. She stated, "The whole point of writing ... is for sharing" and made this evident in her classroom. Students shared their ideas in brainstorming sessions as well as during and after the writing process. Time was specifically allotted for oral reading of stories; everyone had a turn over a span of several days. Mrs. E. shared her writing with the class. Books and stories were "published" by the class for display, for reading to other classes or for placement in the library. In building background for writing, Mrs. E. drew upon authors of stories and articles and shared their works with the class explaining that these were "recording other people's interests and involvement" in our topic.

The nine subordinate constructs that lay on the surface of these beliefs were major components of Mrs. E.'s approach to writing. Fluent and creative ideas were fostered by doing group brainstorming and discussions, and encouraged through the presentation of varied oral and visual stimuli. During the writing process, Mrs. E. promoted diversification of ideas as witnessed by the many questions she answered. She related, "Their minds were going at such a rate ... they were trying to see how fanciful they could become." Mrs. E. praised their ideas and gave them 'free rein' to use those they came up with. She said, "I didn't want to 'squash' them ... I wanted them to use as many different things as possible." Ideas were kept flowing by de-emphasizing neatness and correctness in the first draft. Mrs. E.'s frequent interruptions during the writing time may be seen as one practice that hindered the flow of writing she valued. As she moved around the room, Mrs. E. would call the class's attention to a particular passage a student had written or to the way a student had tackled a problem inthe assignment. Mrs. E. herself identified these practices as a way of helping students to focus on the task or to familiarize them with possible choices; as such, it supports her belief regarding the expansion of experience prior to making judgements or choices. However, for those students who were involved in the writing process, these comments may have broken their flow of creative ideas. Students worked on second and third drafts to "polish" their writing for their audiences. Illustrations received special attention as they were seen as another way to "read" a story. Mrs. E. asked her students to pick out the most important part of their parachuting stories to illustrate and reminded her students that for young children it might be necessary to "tell the story with pictures" therefore "the pictures need to say more than one thing." Mrs. E. valued good description using a variety of vocabulary. In building background to a theme, Mrs. E. wrote lists of brainstormed words on the blackboard or chart paper or had students record these in their books. In subsequent discussions, presentations or stories, she repeated several times, the terms peculiar to the topic. In one lesson, Mrs. E. encouraged students to "look at your list of vocabulary words for things you might see, hear, feel." Students were praised in front of the class for using new or unusual words in their writing. Mrs. E. wanted her students to express their feelings in their writing and fostered this by having them choose their own approach to an assignment. ("If you give them a choice they will hopefully write something with more feeling.") In one editing sequence, Mrs. E. asked the student, "Could you increase the feeling? Tell me more about it" and later confirmed, "Now she is going to tell me about her actual (parachute) drop ... what went on in the air, what she'd seen, what she'd felt."

Mrs. E.'s belief about expanding one's experiential background in preparation for wise decision-making was reflected in two superordinate constructs [E3 = Judgements are made everyday of your life; E4 = People must experience all aspects of writing (or an experience) to be able to make a legitimate choice]. Mrs. E. devoted considerable time prior to actual writing to building background for the stories. In preparation for writing parachuting stories, she had facilitated discussions on kinds and uses of parachutes, shared stories describing how parachuting was done including wartime stories about night drops, drew diagrams of types of parachutes and harnesses and "read a passage from Evanmore about training before parachuting." In physical education classes, the students had worked with a parachute canopy to experience its properties. Mrs. E. also showed slides of hot-air ballooning; "since they had not been up in a parachute or come down in a parachute this is the closest I could get to the feeling of what it would look like." A demonstration of a toy parachute was staged. These activities spanned over several days and gradually focused upon the writing assignment.

Only after immersing the class in the topic did Mrs. E. ask students to choose a point of view from which to write their stories. She stated they have "had all the information given to them in the same way so now they can choose." Previous work involving newspaper articles had illustrated different points of view and Mrs. E. felt it was important for children to realize that "there are different ways of looking at something."

By utilizing a variety of materials in presenting a topic, Mrs. E. hoped to establish a background from various viewpoints. Even as she shared her writing or the writing of other students ["I had an approach that they hadn't chosen so I could offer them another choice."], she stressed that these were "choices," but left the final judgement regarding which approach to use to each student. In one instance, she announced to the class, "_____ is taking the position of being a commander of a flight and she's writing conversation as she directs the flight ... this is one approach you could use." This evidence seems to suggest that Mrs. E. was directing the creativity and free choice of her students by giving approval to certain points of view over others. However, the analysis of these observations shows that this apparent contradiction was driven by the need to stimulate some of the students who appeared to not be participating fully or not focused on the task at hand. Others had already chosen a point of view and were involved in writing. Mrs. E. found some students "still couldn't make a decision about their starts" and so facilitated the decision-making by reviewing the possibilities and having students talk about their ideas.

Several practices corresponded to Mrs. E.'s belief that "People should be able to achieve success at whatever level they are at" [E8]. Mrs. E. approached much of the writing program by using patterns and modelling books and poetry. She explained, "I think that gives them more security in that they can all complete an assignment following the pattern set down but there is enough flexibility in there for them to develop the story to the greatest degree that they are able." In addition the framework of an assignment is "discussed, described and set down in our brainstorming." Mrs. E. reviewed, at the beginning of each day what had been done so far and gave numerous reminders throughout the writing period of her expectations. Mrs. E. encouraged a feeling of success with her students by assisting them with their stories. Both the researcher and the teacher identified times when Mrs. E. acted as a 'scribe' for students having problems composing their stories. "She knew what she wanted to say and she was giving me a couple of key words and I would give her alternatives. She said, "I fell down."

"Where did you fall down?"

"Well, I'm not sure."

"Did you land on water? Did you land on trees or bushes?"

"And she can choose ... I had her dictate it and we finally got it down."

Praise was an integral part of her individual discussions with students. Even in discussing some problems with students, Mrs. E. projected a positive profile with comments like "they are getting there" and "he had some really good ideas." With this attitude Mrs. E. projected her perceptions of her student as successful writers.

One superordinate construct dealt with the effort students put into their work [E7 = In relation to everything they do, children need to know a lot of work goes into something well done.] Mrs. E. expected published writing to be the children's best. Often this necessitated two or three drafts of a story. Mrs. E. reminded students that all published authors went through similar processes. She carried through on this premise by having students produce their own hard-cover books by modelling the form of books they had seen (dedications, publishing information, copyrights, dust cover). Mrs. E. stated,

> I want to make sure their writing is important. Our writing is as good to us as an author who has published ... so if it is important to us, it

> goes through the exact stages that a publisher goes through or an author goes through. I think they understand and appreciate ... what goes into a book ... They're beginning to realize that a first draft, second draft, third draft is sometimes necessary to really achieve what you want in a piece.

The last belief statement [E2 = Language is a living, changing thing that reflects life today. Life should be stimulating, therefore language should be stimulating] was quite general in its scope. Mrs. E. modelled this belief in her daily interactions with her students. She demonstrated a love of language through the stimulating literature she read to her class and the ways in which she expressed herself. She drew attention to and praised the use of descriptive words such as "panoramic view" and "twilight zone." Mrs. E. felt that paragraphing gave the students an opportunity to expand their language because "If they have to stay with one (topic), chances are they will expand and expand and they will learn other ways of expressing, describing, and putting something together." Mrs. E. helped students individually with paragraphing skills as they were needed. She did this by showing students where a subject ended. She felt that pargraphing was necessary to help the reader keep up his interest and his comprehension of a story.

Many practices were identified to corroborate seven of Mrs. E.'s beliefs. One belief found limited support in her practices while one belief was global in its scope and found general support in Mrs. E.'s instructional practices and her obvious love of langauge. In general, it would appear that Mrs. E.'s beliefs and practices were congruent.

In this chapter, six teacher case studies were presented. Each study began with a teacher profile which included a description of the class setting and student population and an overview of the writing program. Teacher perceptions of instructional practices and researcher perceptions of instructional practices were tabulated. An analysis of teacher beliefs and values was made. Finally, the degree of congruency between perceived practices and teacher beliefs about writing was determined.

TABLE 16

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER ONE

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
discussion	I usually review what we have already done and remind them.	There was quite a lot of brainstorming yesterday ... just to get their enthusiasm going
slide presentation	Since they had not come down in a parachute, ... this was the closest I could do for getting their enthusiasm going.	I wanted them to be able to describe things that looked totally different from being on the ground.
magazine articles and pictures	This was recording other people's interests and involvement in flying ... they need some visual stimuli ... something to relate to their feelings.	It's very hard for them to write about feelings they haven't had so the more stimuli you can give them the better.
retelling of a story	I read them a story yesterday ... and by going through it again ... I hoped [they] would be able to visualize some of it.	If they go through each stage more than once it makes it clearer ... to see there was a sequence of events ... they could use some of the words I used.
demonstration of toy parachute	I'd asked them to bring in any pictures or anything to do with parachuting.	It (toy parachute) was an ideal visual effect.
choice of point of view	I was trying to draw their thoughts together to a point of view ... so I give them a choice on how they want to approach a story.	If you give them a choice, they will hopefully write something with more feeling.
sharing of teacher writing	The object of me writing is that I think it is important enough therefore I write too and I've used my own opening.	There were five who hadn't made a start so this is the way I started mine; you could use that.
review of instructions	I try to set the climate ... to give them as much detail on how to get going on their story.	Time was running out so I wanted them to write.

TABLE 16

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
circulating in room	I was answering questions ... I was trying to say, "Yes you could do all these things but be realistic" so I didn't want to squash them — I was trying to keep it within the bounds of reason.	They had started the creative process ... I said I was going to start writing but I though it was more profitable letting them come up with more and more things.
discussion with student	I couldn't really understand, he wanted to talk about that sort of parachute and the answer was eventually yes.	
reading a student's opening - sharing with class	She wanted me to read it — so I was just checking that out and using it to comment to the class by saying this is one approach.	She had established her point of view — she just wanted to know if that approach was correct.
reacting to a story	So having said, "That's some very good stuff," I said, "Now could your increase the actual feeling?"	
BREAK IN TAPE DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES		
teacher sharing of story	I actually had written the first paragraph of my story and during the lapse I had read this to the class — and said you could use that approach if you wanted to — then I travelled around the class trying to help those who hadn't gotten started.	
work with Grade 4 students	I try to make a point of being with them (Grade 4) a little more than the others.	

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 16

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER TWO

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
some students read stories orally	I was giving the opportunity to share their work by reading it out to the rest of the class.	It gives them an incentive to write if they are going to have an audience ... When they read out loud they find their mistakes.
reminder about title	I was trying to give the story some physical restrictions.	It makes them think in terms of how would they talk about this story.
reminder about proof-reading	I'm trying to make them aim for quality in their work.	If you are sharing a book ... then your writing had to be your best.
illustrations	I was trying to make them pick out the most important part of their story to them and have them illustrate it.	We're trying to make this attractive to other people.
helping a student	Paragraphing ... I was trying to show him where a thought or subject or something ended and where he was to put in his paragraphs. I just put in the first two or three. I was trying to give him the hint where the next subject was coming.	He was ready for paragraph writing and the others are not.
extra work	I was just asking her to do some writing practice, nothing to do with what we were doing.	Her actual handwriting is in dire need of assistance.
assistance with illustrations.	I was hoping that she would be able to copy one or trace one or I was going to sketch her one.	
editing a confused story	I asked her to tell the story and I wrote it down ... she was giving a couple of key words and I would give her alternatives ... she can choose.	She knows something is wrong but she doesn't know how to put it right.
editing	I get them to read to me or I read them ... I put a mark under it (missing word) ... and she can go through it again and fill that in.	

TABLE 16

TEACHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

Referent	Actual Statement of Practice	Teacher Comments
discipline	I was just waiting for ____ to be reasonable and then go through his story.	
editing	I just took one look at it and said, "You read it to me" because I couldn't.	It's so confused that we end up rewriting it.
reference to 'good' word	I pointed it (word - twilight) out to the rest of the class.	It was a well-used word and unusual and he needed a boost at that time.
editing	I was having to write all the words he is missing without trying to rearrange his thought process ... I had to keep asking him questions so he actually supplied the words I'm putting in.	
showed illustration to class	I wanted to reinforce the fact that pictures need to be really bright and gay and simple	
returns to check student	I wanted to make sure he was on the path and I went back over and over.	

END OF TAPED SESSION

TABLE 17

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER ONE

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-reviews the discussions about parachutes yesterday and reminds students about a story they heard	
-introduces and shows slides on hot-air ballooning	
-discusses the differences in aerial views	What was the word we used yesterday. Exactly, panoramic ... If you were parachuting you would get this type of view shortly before hitting the ground.
-shares experiences had during a hot-air balloon ride	You can see how small the animals seemed.
-shows a magazine article on balloon racing, summarizing story and showing pictures	
-shows an article of hang-gliding	You would get the same sort of feeling
-teacher asks students to close their eyes and listen to a teacher-told story	Look at your list of vocabulary words for things you might see, hear, feel and then I want you to close your eyes and tell you a story ... I'll take you through the stages of a parachute drop.
-asks students to begin thinking about story ideas	I have never jumped from a parachute, nor have you, so we are going to have to use a bit of imagination.
-tells students a story using terminology of parachuting	You will have to pull your own ripcord; you are not attached to a snap-line.
-disciplines a student	
-asks a student to demonstate his toy parachute	
-suggests several points of view from which students may write and suggests things they might include	You can describe what happened, what it looked like, what you saw, the sounds you heard.

TABLE 17

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-specifies topic must be on parachuting	It is basically parachuting. "When I went parachuting or If only I could go parachuting ... "
-directs children to decide point of view first	Just a minute. Don't start writing. Decide which point of view you are going to write from.
-explains that she will be writing too	
-sets time guidelines and rules for talking, questions	...and in 32 minutes let's see if anyone can have a parachute story to share with us.
	You don't have to start writing instantly. I want you to think so this is your best creation.
-answers questions from students	
-shares ideas students have with other members of the class as suggestions for story situations. Adds other suggestions of her own	Don't forget, you could land in a tree, in water ...
-writes correct spelling of a word on the blackboard	
-reminds students about time restrictions	If you don't start writing you won't have any time soon.
-circulates around the room and answers questions	
-silently reads the story a student has written and comments aloud to the class	_____'s got quite a lot of conversation in hers.
-reads another story; questions students and asks for further expansion.	

TABLE 17

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER ONE (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
BREAK IN TAPE DUE TO TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES	
-reads story; praises student	I like all your questions. It's going well.
-dismisses class for recess	
END OF TAPED SESSION	

TABLE 17

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER TWO

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-distributes stories children had written	
-explains procedure for class	While you are listening, I'll distribute your top copies.
-praises students generally for excellent stories	Again, I have read them through and they are just so good.
-announces that students will oral read stories.	
-asks student to read his story orally and comments	Good idea, good finish.
-asks several other students to share and makes a brief comment	Thank you. A really well put together story.
-reminds students to put a title at the top of their story	
-suggests placement of name, omission of date, etc.	You also don't need to put the date because on the cover of the book it will say the date the book was written.
-asks students to proof-read their good copy	If this book is being given to the library we want it as good as possible.
-explains that some will have to re-write their good copy	It just isn't good print. People can't read it so it has to be your best writing.
-reminds students where they can get help with spelling.	
-asks students for illustration to go with their story	
-gives directions for illustrations and demonstrates using the class book made	This one got a bit difficult because we had to turn the page to see the picture.
-gives directions for placement of longer stories in the book	If your story is two pages, would you do what books do and put [1,] then we know it is continued.

TABLE 17

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-returns remainder of stories	
-suggests title	Why not just "Parachuting"?
-distributes paper	
-reads story; helps a student edit; makes changes on the paper	Where do you think this paragraph should end?
-circulates in room helping with procedure problems	
-checks student on paragraphing progress	
-asks students not to walk around	
-helps a student find an illustration to look at	
-asks student to rewrite story and demonstrates proper spacing	Leave a space under the title and underline it.
-handles a discipline problem	
-corrects a story for a student	
-reminds students of the process 'real authors' go through	An author of a book does draft after draft, they never use their first draft.
-helps a student edit and correct his story; comments upon parts (The student read and the teacher made corrections)	Can anyone tell me when 'twilight zone' is? Trevor has used it and it's such a nice expression.
-draws attention to one student's illustration	If you'd like to look at Jody's picture, it is so colorful.
-suggests students could continue during storytime	
-praises students	We have some great illustrations to go with the stories.

TABLE 17

RESEARCHER IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES: MRS. E. LESSON NUMBER TWO (Continued)

IDENTIFICATION OF PRACTICES	QUOTATIONS FROM TEACHER
-dismisses class for recess	
END OF TAPED SESSION	

TABLE 18 MRS. E.

Subordinate Constructs (Values)	Superordinate Constructs (Beliefs)
1. neat handwriting 5. punctuation (including italics, dots, etc.) 11. illustrations match the story	E1. It is important to leave a record of ourselves; everyone has so much to contribute in life.
2. paragraphs	E2. Language is a living changing thing that reflects life today. Life should be stimulating therefore language should be stimulating.
3. different points of view	E3. Judgments are made everyday of your life.
4. conversational style	E4. People must experience all aspects of writing (or an experience) to be able to make a legitimate judgment.
6. fluent ideas 7. imaginative, creative, inventive stories	E5. Sharing with other people is what life is all about.
9. making story interesting for the reader; staying on topic	E6. Writing must be interesting for both the writer and reader.
10. ability to model books	E7. In relation to everything they do, children need to know a lot of work goes into something well done.
12. follow directions for assignment 14. follow pattern but be creative	E8. People should be able to achieve success at whatever level they are at. Writing reflects thoughts, dreams, fantasy.
8. using vocabulary discussed 13. variety of vocabulary 15. description	E9. Vocabulary helps to communicate your feelings.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview

In this chapter a summary of the purpose and design of the study is presented, followed by a discussion of the data in terms of the research questions originally posed in Chapter One. Conclusions are drawn in reference to the questions. Implications for pedagogical practice and further research conclude the chapter.

Summary

Purpose

The purpose of the study was to 1) examine teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing and writing instruction, 2) identify observable instructional practices that teachers employ in teaching the writing component of the Language Arts curriculum and 3) determine the extent of congruence between teacher beliefs and practices.

Procedures for Gathering and Analyzing Data

Six teachers were videotaped as they each taught two lessons leading to extended student writing. Each teacher completed a questionnaire concerning his/her general writing program. A modified version of the Repertory Grid (Bannister, 1968) and Laddering Procedure (Hinkle, 1968) was conducted with each teacher to elicit beliefs about writing and writing instruction. The videotaped lessons were analyzed independently by both the researcher and teacher to identify observable instructional practices which are reported in table form. Beliefs and practices were examined for correspondence. The findings were reported in case study format. Data from across the case studies was analyzed in reference to the research questions.

Discussion and Conclusions

In chapter four, data was reported and analyzed for each individual teacher. In this section data is consolidated from all cases and examined in light of the research questions and conclusions formulated. The generalizability of this study is limited by the small number of subjects and video-taped lessons for each case study. However, within the six case studies presented, some tentative conclusions can be made regarding the nature of teachers' beliefs about writing, the instructional practices employed in teaching writing and the congruence between the two. The research questions, originally posed in Chapter 1, form the framework for these concluding statements.

1. What is the nature of teachers' belief systems about writing?

Through the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure, all teachers were able to generate a number of belief statements of superordinate constructs. They ranged in number from six to seventeen, with the average being nine. Whereas all belief statements originated as values specific to writing, not all superordinate constructs ended up as beliefs about writing in particular. Most often, belief statements were set in the realm of "life" or "societal" beliefs such as "A positive self-image is important for the good of society".

The fifty-seven superordinate statements were analyzed in terms of broad consistencies. All teachers generated beliefs specific to writing, language, communication or interaction. Thirteen superordinate constructs dealt with the notion that writing or communication is a necessary part of functioning in society and further, that interaction helps us understand ourselves and others. Four teachers expressed the view that interaction, in any form, is a natural part of our social way of life. Three teachers declared that communication is a key to understanding and knowing ourselves and a way for others to know us. Two teachers indicated that communication is helpful in progressing towards one's goals in life. Another two teachers had the view that everyone had something worthwhile to communicate with others. One teacher saw writing as an alternate two-way method of communicating.

Eight superordinate constructs centered around the view that positive feelings and attitudes are desirable. Two teachers professed to the importance of individuals achieving success and feeling pleased with themselves. Two beliefs stated that positive attitudes and good self-images benefit people around us. One teacher believed self motivation was the key to emotional well-being while another attributed this to healthy feelings and healthy minds. One teacher believed positive feelings helped people cope with stress.

Five superordinate constructs expressed views about the learning process. Two teachers believed life was an on-going, changing learning process. Three teachers held the opinion that learning was a risk-taking process. Individually-held convictions added that 1) one must take risks to implement changes, 2) society expects risk-taking and confidence and 3) we must take risks and change situations to give the most we can to society.

Five superordinate constructs centered around the idea of effort or striving to do one's best. One teacher believed a goal in life was to become the best person you could be while another thought it was important to always give your best effort. One teacher felt that if students cared about their writing, it was worthwhile doing it well, and extended the belief to say that the desire to realistically improve oneself was an inherent quality. One teacher mentioned that it was important for children to know that something well done requires effort.

Several teachers believed that language or writing could, and should, be interesting. Two beliefs dealt with the beauty and stimulating nature of our language as it reflects life around us. Two teachers noted that writing must be interesting for the writer, and to attract readers. One teacher added that a person should get the maximum out of what they read (what is written).

Five superordinate constructs dealt with the idea that order and "correctness" are valued or inherent in society. The beliefs were expressed by two teachers that life is organized, has some sequence and people try to make sense of everything. One teacher stated that grammar, usage, neatness and legibility were valued by society while another expounded the need to know the correct or acceptable way to do things.

Four belief statements expressed the notion that humans must learn to cope in a gregarious environment. Two teachers stated that coping is part of surviving in the world. One teacher viewed acceptance by society as a necessary goal while another professed that we understand we are not alone in our feelings.

Two teachers expressed beliefs regarding decision-making. They believed that students who had experienced many things and were well informed would be better decision-makers. Two belief statements dealt with students being independent and developing self-reliance. Two other belief statements stated that people learn from, and can teach, others. The remaining belief statements could not be grouped or classified. Each teacher had at least one unique belief statement.

It is interesting to note that similar subordinate constructs did not necessarily lead to similar belief statements. For example, three teachers mentioned that they valued the child's ability to follow a model or pattern. This lead one teacher to generate the belief, "Everyone can teach others and they can also learn from others," another stated, "In relation to everything they do, children need to know a lot of work goes into something well done," while the third said, "We need to know how to do things, correct versus non-correct. There is a way that is acceptable". Conversely, similar superordinate structures often grew out of dissimilar subordinate structures (value statements). For example, two teachers generated similar belief statements regarding learning from others. [J6=People are individuals and the individual is special. We can learn in different ways from different people] [P9=Everyone can teach others and they can also learn from others.] One of these beliefs originated as valuing of originality and creativity while the other began as a valuing of the ability to follow a pattern.

Within each case study, it was observed that the teacher's belief statements often followed a particular orientation or focus. Mrs. P.'s belief statements presented the view that positive, independent individuals are accepted, and fit in, with society. Mrs. L.'s beliefs reflect the notion that society has expectations of others, and individuals who meet those expectations will be able to cope in society, also that individuals must understand themselves and others. Mrs. J.'s belief system had effective communication as its main theme. She felt positive, independent individuals, through effective communication would become part of society and function well within it. Mrs. M.'s belief statements seemed to indicate an underlying belief in the communicative nature of writing; this sharing aspect necessitated correctness and a falling in with societal expectations. The notion of "self" figured strongly in Mr. G.'s belief statements. The development of self-identity and the improving of oneself were the two underlying foci of his belief statements. Mrs. E.'s belief statements reflected a positive view of life and writing. These were seen as stimulating experiences to appreciate and share with others.

In summary, it can be seen that there was some similarity in the beliefs held by the teachers about the following themes: 1) communication is a necessity to functioning in society, 2) positive feelings and attitudes are desirable, 3) learning involves risk-taking, 4) putting effort into work or striving to do one's best is desirable, 5) language writing should be interesting, 6) order and correctness is valued by society, 7) learning to cope in society is a necessity; 8) well-informed people are better decision-makers, 9) Self-reliance and independence are important qualities; 10) people learn from each other. While there were many global commonalities, it was noted that many different facets of these belief statements were expressed. Each teacher expressed some beliefs that were unique to that individual. Therefore, it may be concluded that teachers have individualistic belief systems regarding the writing process but that commonalities occur across belief systems. Further, writing beliefs tend to be influenced by the individual's global beliefs about life and society.

2. What practices do individual teachers employ in

teaching the writing component of the language arts curriculum?

The questionnaire and video-taped lessons were utilized as sources to identify practices teachers employed in their classrooms to teach the writing component of Language Arts. Teachers responded to ~~the~~ questionnaire in varying degrees of detail but all succeeded in conveying a rounded description of their philosophy and program. Some teachers closely followed the text of the video taped lessons in identifying practices they employed while others provided global descriptions of their practices as visual or auditory stimuli of the same triggered their memory. The researcher generally identified more specific, and repeated incidences of particular practices than did the teachers.

The data pertaining to classroom practices was analyzed to identify broad consistencies. Five of the six teachers based their writing activities around themes and integrated writing through several subject areas. All teachers had their students involved in a variety of writing activities and forms, though these themselves varied from case to case.

Five teachers were observed engaging in many pre-writing practices. In general these were aimed at building background and vocabulary for writing and giving students opportunities to listen to ideas and practice their ideas orally before writing. These activities included stories, films, discussions, drama, brainstorming for words and ideas, oral completion of frames or models, modelling by the teacher and students, motivational devices and reviewing of previous work on the theme. Three teachers made use of concrete, hands-on activities to provide a stimulus for writing.

All six teachers modelled some aspect of the writing process for their students. Three teachers actually wrote while their students were writing. Three teachers modelled the completion of a pattern or frame by orally completing it. One teacher distributed a completed sample, a recipe, of the writing task. In all but one case study, correct spelling was demonstrated as teachers recorded brainstormed words and vocabulary on the blackboard, on charts or on word cards.

All case studies showed elements of student choice in writing. One teacher allowed students free choice of writing topics for their daily writing time. In two videotaped lessons the genre had been set (recipe, poem) while two other lessons set the general topic (Pecos Bill adventure parachuting); students were given free choice within these guidelines. Three lessons featured patterns or frames to be completed as students chose. Four teachers reported students having free choice in their journal or diary writing.

All teachers employed elements of conferencing as their students wrote. They read or listened to, the written work of individuals and responded with praise, questions and concerns. Four teachers moved around the class initiating interactions with students about their writing. One teacher appeared to conference with students when they indicated a need for help or reinforcement. One teacher set up conference groups which met at scheduled times at the conference table and followed a set procedure for interactions. Two other teachers designated a special spot for editing conferences which the children visited as needed. Two teachers related that they role-modeled editing techniques for their students using their own writing or group writing as sources. Four teachers concentrated on spelling and mechanics in their editing work with students; the other two focused on content to a greater extent. Two teachers taught skills solely on an individual basis, as the need arose. The other four teachers taught some whole group or small group lessons on skills but also reinforced skills on an individual basis during writing times. Two teachers kept records of conferences and/or skills that had been mastered.

In all cases, teachers facilitated and encouraged the sharing of writing. Oral sharing with individuals, small groups or the whole class, and displays of written work was evident in all six classrooms. As well, class books, individual books and/or newsletters figured prominently in all cases. In all but one case, students were encouraged to interact with each other during the writing process. In two classrooms, the teachers specifically placed students in close proximity to each other to facilitate interaction; in three other classrooms students were free to move around and discuss their work. In one case, the teacher was concerned with maintaining a quiet environment but promoted sharing during a designated time. In five cases teachers elected to share orally samples of student writing in progress as good examples or as motivation for others. In the sixth case, the group conference setting allowed students to hear a variety of writing samples. Two teachers shared some of their own writing with students.

A final commonality stemmed from a shared philosophical notion of the six teachers involved. In these classrooms, children were seen as "authors" and were allowed to retain "ownership" of their writing. These concepts were reflected in different ways. In the three case studies that utilized patterns or frames, the teachers accepted deviations from the pattern; a typical comment was "You are the author so you can do that". Three teachers specified that students make the final decisions in their writing--the decision to complete the story, to edit and correct, or to publish and display. Two teachers, during editing conferences, made marks where corrections were needed (following discussion with pupils) but expected students to take the responsibility to follow up on them. Two cases emulated the steps of publishing from editing to the production of books complete with dedication and copyright. Two cases celebrated authors by including student-authored books in the library or reading them to the class as they would trade books. Praise, encouragement and appreciation of written works was evident in all classrooms.

It is interesting to note that although broad similarities existed across the case studies, each teacher had unique features in the writing program. One teacher employed a sustained silent writing time at the beginning of each writing class, another offered a "think time" before students were expected to write. Others integrated reading and writing, drama and writing or art and writing. Two teachers encouraged illustrations along with written work. One teacher initiated writing by having students participate in oral circle stories (add-a-part to the story). One teacher placed an agenda of activities on the blackboard for students to follow while three others had students reiterate the task assignment before beginning. Two teachers were observed scribing for students. One teacher responded to her students daily in their diaries. One teacher asked students to submit pieces of writing for formal evaluation. Within each case study, the teachers individual personalities led to unique variations in teaching methods and, indeed, the way he or she interacted with students. Mrs. P.'s practices encouraged children to become independent as reflected in her editing conferences. As students read to Mrs. P., she would stop and discuss parts that needed work and make a mark in the margin to remind students who then had the responsibility to go back to their desks and revise the writing. Mrs. L.'s practices focused on giving children many support systems for writing, making them confident as authors so they would feel free to take risks. This is evidenced in the pattern frame writing experience, with many pre-writing oral trials and Mrs. L.'s accepting attitude. Mrs. J.'s practices showed her desire to make students self-directed. Students worked at tables to facilitate interaction and she allowed students time to work without interruption by the teacher. Writing tasks were preceded by group work to clarify the process and carefully laid directions and agendas. Mrs. M.'s role focused mainly on helping students extend their writing. Her practices also reflected a concern for correctness. Mr. G.'s conferencing, workshop approach to writing reflected many practices where students were allowed to make decisions and take control of their own writing tasks. Mrs. E.'s methods reflected a love of language. Prewriting sessions focused on exciting vocabulary that could be included in writing assignments.

Models of writing Mrs. E. choose to share, whether by professionals or students, emphasized the excitement of action and clear communication of such a vivid language. It can be seen that each case study presented a unique combination or variation of teaching practices. Graves (1975) concluded his study of the writing process of seven year old children by saying, "the writing process is as variable and unique as the individual's personality." (p. 237). Perhaps this postulate could be extended to teaching by saying that the act of teaching writing is as variable and unique as the individual's personality.

However, it is possible to abstract from the performances of the different teachers in varied lessons a general picture of the practices employed in teaching writing. Classrooms were physically set up to encourage and facilitate writing. This included special arrangements of desks, access to materials, designated writing corners and sharing centres. Students had been familiarized with routines and times for writing. Writing sessions began with prewriting activities that allowed children to get their ideas flowing. Often this involved brainstorming, vocabulary development, hands-on experiences, book reading, introduction of patterns or time allotted just for thinking. Teachers set an example, by writing themselves, modelling patterns, having students rehearse orally so others could hear or sharing pieces of writing with the class. Writing involved a free choice component whether it was totally free-topic choice or a freedom to work within the given topic, genre or pattern. During the writing time teachers were engaged in helping students continue through the process by questioning, listening, encouraging, sharing and giving time for ideas to develop. Typically, skills were developed on an individual need basis during the composing process with the onus put on students to revise, edit or correct with teacher guidance. Sharing of writing was an integral component of writing classes though the timing and procedures for doing so varied, and ranged from oral sharing with the teacher, small group or whole group to formal publication or display of stories and books. Written work was often structured around class themes.

In summary, it has been shown that, within broad categories, there was some consistency in the practices the six teachers employed in their writing programs. Common practices centered around extensive prewriting activities, modelling by the teacher and others, a free choice component within the writing activity, conferencing or interaction with students during editing procedures, and the extension of skills. Sharing, of the writing process and the final product was another common feature in the six case studies presented as was encouragement and praise of the writing act. Each teacher adhered to some unique practices or variations of common practices. Therefore, it may be concluded that teachers employ many common practices in teaching writing but unique concerns shape these practices into a teacher's individualistic instructional style.

3. Are an individual teacher's practices and beliefs congruent?

In this study, data was collected through a questionnaire and video-taped lessons on the practices each teacher employed in teaching the writing program. Then, through the Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure, each teacher's beliefs about writing were ascertained. The two sets of data were compared to examine the measure of congruency between beliefs and practices. In each of the six case studies, instructional behaviours and practices were found to substantiate specific belief statements. Conversely, however, not all belief statements were corroborated by the data collected. This may have been due, in part, to the limited scope of the data collection process or to the global nature of particular belief statements. In three of the six cases, all belief statements were considered to be congruent with practices. In the other three cases, evidence of instructional practices could not be found to corroborate one or two beliefs, but these belief statements tended to be very general in nature. Evidence, however, was found to substantiate these beliefs in the general philosophy of writing expressed by the teacher or in his or her personal teaching style. As noted previously, many belief statements were outside the immediate realm of writing, or education, and therefore were difficult to support with the data which was collected in a specifically educational setting.

An examination of specific case studies illustrated an interesting correspondence between beliefs and practices. When belief statements were analyzed, a particular "theme" seemed to emerge suggesting a personal view of life. This same "theme" was predominant in the overall character of a teacher's instructional practice. It would appear a teacher's beliefs about writing influence the practices employed in teaching writing.

Based on the six case studies, therefore, it may be concluded that a high degree of congruency exists between some individual teacher beliefs and practices.

Implications for Pedagogical Practices

The findings of this study have some implications for teaching in general, and the teaching of writing, specifically.

1. The study showed that teachers did have individualistic belief systems regarding the writing process, although often these beliefs tended to be

influenced by global beliefs about life and society. By and large, teachers at the beginning of the study were unaware of their beliefs or had never expressed or examined the beliefs that influenced their teaching practices. As they proceeded through the Repertory Grid and Laddering process, they struggled to justify their values and experienced what can best be described as a 'minor revelation' when they reached their first superordinate construct or belief statement. Self-awareness would appear, then, to be the starting point to understanding one's beliefs. The Repertory Grid and Laddering Procedure used in this study provides a fairly quick and comprehensive method to ascertain values and beliefs within the writing context. It is suggested that teachers, with a colleague or on their own, examine their beliefs about writing (or other subject area) to better understand why they do what they do. It follows that personnel involved in the other levels of education, such as administrators, consultants, and post-secondary instructors could also benefit from an awareness of the belief systems that guide their actions.

2. The study showed that teachers employed many common practices in teaching writing, but each had some unique and successful variations or methodologies within their repertoire of instructional practices. Most teachers in the study had never consciously examined and identified the

various components of any lesson they taught. Self-awareness of practices may again be recognized as the key to understanding one's own teaching behaviours. Video-taping of classroom lessons or co-operative observation or evaluation sessions between colleagues would help to expand one's awareness of their instructional practices. It follows that knowledge of personal practices will become the foundation upon which other practices can be built in order to expand one's repertoire. To this end, teachers are encouraged, through inservices, classroom intervisitations and graduate level courses, to continue to expand their repertoire of effective classroom practices, realizing that many successful practices can be utilized to reach a common goal.

3. The study showed that a positive relationship existed between an individual teacher's beliefs and practices. Awareness of the interrelatedness of beliefs and practices is to understanding the process of change. Surface change in either beliefs or practices can easily occur; however, for a 'real' change to occur, a teacher needs to experience a concurrent alteration in both his beliefs and practices. This is further justification for teachers being aware of their current beliefs and practices.

Implications for Further Research

The design and results of this study also raised questions and suggested directions for further research.

1. The generalizability of the study is limited due to the small sample size. It is suggested that the study be replicated with a larger sample or replicated in other subject areas to see if similar patterns emerge. A longitudinal study with one subject may be carried out to ascertain if more data leads to a more definite correlation with all beliefs, or to determine if beliefs/practices change over a period of time.

2. The teachers observed volunteered to take part in this study and appeared to enjoy relative freedom in choosing methods to use in their classrooms. Would results be altered if participants had been externally selected or if teachers found themselves in a situation where curriculum or methods were mandated?

3. The field of writing is currently experiencing a paradigm shift from focus on product to an emphasis on process. Another study could examine the difference between traditional and contemporary instructional practices and the beliefs behind them.

4. The beliefs of other people involved in the educational field may influence the atmosphere of the classroom. Another avenue of study could explore the

beliefs of children, parents or administrators and how they relate to teacher beliefs.

Concluding Statements

This study has increased the comprehension of teachers' beliefs about the nature of writing and writing instruction, the practices they employ in writing classes and the relationship between the two. A positive congruence was found to exist between the practices and beliefs of the teachers in this study. There was some commonality perceived among beliefs and practices across the case studies but, by an large, each case study provided a unique insight into a personal teaching situation. The findings suggest a need for teachers to be in tune with their own personal beliefs.

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APPENDIX A

April 17, 1984

Dear Parent,

I am a graduate student involved with educational research at the University of Alberta. My main interest is with writing programs used in schools. I particularly wish to investigate the practices teachers use in promoting writing in their classrooms as well as the educational perspectives that guide these practices. I believe such information is very important to our understanding of effective teaching of writing.

In addition to interviewing your child's teacher, I wish to videotape two actual lessons in writing. Although the main focus of my study is on the teacher, the students will be participating in the lessons during the videotaping. I am writing to ask your permission to allow your child to be present in the classroom during this videotaping.

I have obtained permission from the Edmonton Public School Board to conduct this research project in the schools. As well, the school principal and your child's teacher have willingly consented to this study taking place.

Research information will not refer to any particular student and all participants and schools will be kept completely anonymous.

If you have any questions concerning my research you can contact me at the University of Alberta (432-2286) or through your child's school.

Yours truly,

Arlene M. Savory

________________________ has my permission to be present in
(Child's Name)

the classroom during the videotaping of two writing lessons.

____
Signature of Parent or Guardian

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire has been designed to help the researcher gain a better understanding of a) the goals and objectives of your writing program (or the writing component of your Language Arts program) and b) the way you go about "teaching" writing in the classroom. The information gathered is meant to supplement the two lessons that were videotaped.

In answering the questions you are asked to keep in mind all the writing activities that students engage in during the year in your classroom.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (Confidentiality will be maintained)

Name

Grade you are presently teaching

Years of teaching experience

Years teaching at this grade level

Teacher training Specialization (or Major)

Courses taken or Inservices attended in the area of Writing:

Description of your present class:

-Enrollment

-Setting (open area, self-contained etc.)

-Grouping (homogeneous, heterogeneousetc.)

-Socio-economic level(s) of the neighborhood

This section relates to the kinds of writing that you ask your students to do. In each part, please give as many responses as hold true for you.

1. Typically, the kinds of written work I ask my students to do include

2. I am satisfied with the kind of written work I assign because

3. Additional written work I would like to assign includes

4. I find it difficult to assign the work I would like because

This section relates to the aims that you have for the writing program (or the writing component of the Language Arts program). In each part please give as many responses as hold true for you.

1. The main purposes for writing in my classroom are

2. At this point in the year I find that most students are able to

3. By the end of the year I would like most students to be able to

4. My students' writing enables me to

5. My students' writing enables them to

6. (If applicable) The factors that keep me from reaching the expectations of my writing program are

7. (If applicable) The factors that keep my students from meeting the goals of the writing program are

This section relates to the contexts provided by you for writing to take place. In each part please give as many responses as hold true for you.

1. What physical arrangements are made for writing to occur in the classroom?

2. Before having my students write I typically

3. Before beginning to write I typically have the students

4. While students are writing I usually .

5. If students are experiencing some difficulty during writing I usually

6. What usually happens to students' writing when they are finished?

What sometimes happens to students' writing when they are finished?

What occasionally happens to students' writing when they are finished?

7. I deal with the development of writing skills by

8. When I notice that a student is weak, or is lacking in some skill, I usually

9. How are topics chosen for writing?

10. To whom is writing directed, that is, who is likely to "receive" the writing?

11. Of the total weekly instructional time writing typically constitutes ________________ minutes.

12. Of the total weekly instructional time, I would like writing to constitute ________________ minutes.

13. During the week writing generally occurs

14. Might students take any other opportunity to write?

15. If I was to describe my general approach to writing in the classroom I would describe it briefly as